

Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

Willa K. Baum

Conversations with Willa Baum
Director of the Regional Oral History Office
UC Berkeley, 1958-2000

Interviews conducted by
Germaine LaBerge
Malca Chall
Eleanor Swent
Gabrielle Morris
in 2004-2005

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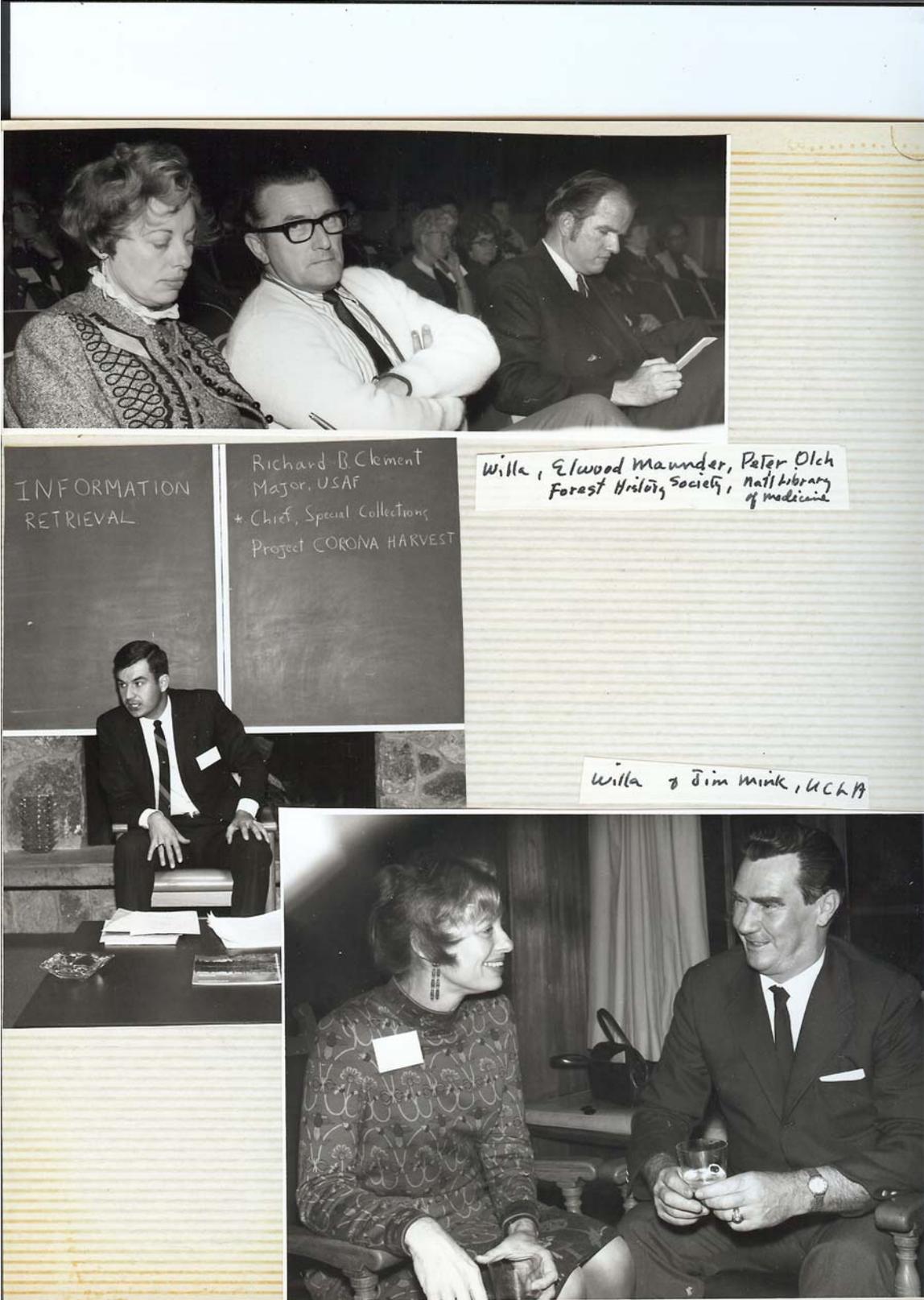
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Willa Baum in the Bancroft Library stacks, 1971



Page from Willa's scrapbook: Oral History Association Colloquium, Asilomar, 1970



Planning the Earl Warren project, 1978:

Left to right, Amelia "Chita" Fry, Gabrielle Morris, Willa, Malca Chall



ROHO staff in the office, early 1980s:

Back row, from left, Leslie Goodwin-Malamuth, Judy Smith, Marge Prince, Wendy Won, Suzanne Riess, Willa Baum, Chita Fry, Ralda Sullivan, Eleanor Glaser.

Seated, from left, Malca Chall, Rosemary Levenson, Mimi Stein, Harriet Nathan, Catherine Harroun, Ruth Teiser



Willa with James D. Hart, director of The Bancroft Library, 1989



The Baum family, 1990

From left, Marc, Willa, Brandon, Anya, Rachel, Eric, Noah



Willa and her desk, 1990s



ROHO staff, 2000

Standing, from left: Sally Hughes, Germaine LaBerge, Shannon Page, Suzanne Riess, Ann Lage, Bob Dirig, Amelia Archer, Laura McCreery, Grace Robinson, Sara Diamond, Carole Hicke.

Seated: Willa, Caroline Crawford



The Baum family, 2003
From left, Marc, Rachel, Willa, Anya, Eric, Brandon

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Preface—by Lisa Rubens

Willa Klug Baum was present at the founding of the Regional Oral History Office in 1954 and served as its first director for forty-three years, from 1958 until her retirement in August 2000. Under her leadership, ROHO became a special research unit of The Bancroft Library, and she became an internationally recognized figure in the field of oral history. In 2000 Willa Baum was awarded the Berkeley Citation by Chancellor Berdahl for excellence in her field and for contributions to UC Berkeley “manifestly above and beyond the call of duty.”

It was only natural Willa Baum’s own life and career would be the subject of an extensive oral history. But she was at first a reluctant interviewee, often commenting that she distrusted her memory. Four years passed before Germaine LaBerge, director of ROHO’s state government history project and a frequent interviewer on the history of the university, began a series of recorded conversations with Willa, as everyone on her staff called her. Then in sequence three more interviewers who were part of the productive team at ROHO took up the narrative. In addition to LaBerge, the interviewers were Malca Chall, Eleanor Swent, and Gabrielle Morris. Their interview histories, which detail their relationship to Willa and the conditions under which the interviews took place, may be read in the appendix to this volume.

As will be clear in the table of contents, this oral history is different from what had been the norm under her tenure: it is more informal, without an introduction by a “notable,” and conducted by multiple interviewers, who volunteered to take the lead in specific chapters of Willa’s life and career. The goal was also to highlight specific talents and interests that each interviewer brought to ROHO.

Having known and worked for Willa since I was a junior at UC Berkeley in the late 1960s, I felt it was important to record Willa’s memories of the founding and development of our institution, especially as the last of her generation retired. I had a unique insider/outsider perspective on ROHO: serving as a consultant and occasional interviewer; using the oral histories in my own research; not coming on board formally until the late nineties. When Germaine LaBerge retired, I took over the University History Series and made sure that Willa’s oral history came to fruition. The interviews were ably transcribed by Shannon Page, an indispensable staff member for many years, and edited by each interviewer, with a final review by Ann Lage, an historian, long time interviewer, and close colleague and friend of Willa’s.

Willa saw the transcriptions, but made no comments or corrections. Ann Lage, myself, and Richard Cándida Smith had planned further interviews, but Willa’s death May 18, 2006, intervened. I am grateful to the current staff of ROHO, particularly Nadine Wilmot and David Dunham, for helping to complete Willa’s oral history. They did not know her well, but understood her capacity to engender respect and loyalty.

I loved Willa. I loved her enthusiasm for and commitment to searching for new interviewees and topics and sources of funding. I loved talking to her, especially sitting by her desk that seemed to have tides: books, journals, leaflets, notes from scholars who had used the collection, notes to herself about what to do next, crested in waves. And once she retired, we talked on the phone, because she loved to keep up with and discuss the new directions ROHO pursued. I'm grateful to be a part of her legacy.

Lisa Rubens
October 2006

Interview with Willa Baum
Interviewed by Germaine LaBerge
Interview 1: July 28, 2004
[Begin audiofile 1]

01-00:00:00

LaBerge: I'm here with Willa Baum at her house in Berkeley, on Spruce Street, and this is interview number one, tape one, July 28, 2004. So Willa, we always like to start at the beginning, so tell me a little bit—I don't know where you were born, when you were born, or the circumstances of your childhood.

01-00:00:30

Baum: Okay. I'll tell you where I started. I was born in Chicago, on October 4, 1926. My mother—let's see. My father was a doctor in downtown Chicago.

01-00:00:53

LaBerge: What was his name?

01-00:00:55

Baum: William Frederick Klug [spells]. My mother was Dorothy Hampton, was her maiden name. Let's see. Mother didn't do anything but take care of the baby.

01-00:01:17

LaBerge: The baby being you?

01-00:01:18

Baum: The baby being me, yes. She went to college--

01-00:01:23

LaBerge: Oh, where—?

01-00:01:23

Baum: I mean, she was just a very busy bee, and there was a lot of socialism stuff going on in Chicago, and she was going to meetings in cafeterias and all kinds of things. It was a very lively town, and she had a lot of fun doing those things.

01-00:01:42

LaBerge: So were your parents both Socialists?

01-00:01:45

Baum: Oh, no.

01-00:01:46

LaBerge: No, okay. You mean social works?

01-00:01:49

Baum: No, Socialist. Mother thought she was a Socialist. Norman Thomas. I don't know if he was the candidate then, but I think he'd always been a candidate

for President. I don't know what my father was. My father came from Germany, pre-World War I.

01-00:02:17

LaBerge: How old was he when he came?

01-00:02:19

Baum: That I don't know. But he was probably forty-something when I was born.

01-00:02:32

LaBerge: Had he gotten his education in Germany, or in the United States?

01-00:02:37

Baum: In the United States. He came from a part of Germany that was Suedetenland. It was fought over, over and over again, between the Germans, the Czechs, the—when he was born, it was Austria-Hungary. We went there to visit in 1933, and it was Czechoslovakia. It was one of the first places Hitler moved in on and grabbed, and it was Germany.

01-00:03:11

LaBerge: What was the name of the town that he came from?

01-00:03:14

Baum: Oh, goodness, I don't know how to spell it. Hermansieffen[?].

01-00:03:23

LaBerge: So you went there really as a young girl, like six or seven?

01-00:03:28

Baum: Right. Yes, we did.

01-00:03:28

LaBerge: Just to visit family, or--?

01-00:03:31

Baum: Well, my father died, and we had been planning to go there. By then I had a sister, who was two years younger than I.

01-00:03:42

LaBerge: Whose name is?

01-00:03:44

Baum: Patricia Gretchen Klug.

01-00:03:47

LaBerge: But called Gretchen.

01-00:03:48

Baum: But called Gretchen now, yes. We'd been planning to go, my father wanted to take his family to visit his mother and father. My father died suddenly, and so my mother went anyway, because she was broken-hearted for his family, because he was sort of their brilliant son that was going to go forth into

America, and he'd already sent them money, enough money to build a big house. They had a house. His sister or two sisters lived there, and his mother and father. Anyway, so we were going to have a wonderful family get-together, and it didn't happen.

Let's see, so what did we do? We moved out to Niles Center, which was a suburb of Chicago. My father could go to work on the train.

01-00:04:52
LaBerge:

What kind of medicine did he do?

01-00:04:54
Baum:

He was an osteopath, which is sort of between health doctor and medical doctor.

01-00:05:04
LaBerge:

And where had he gone to school, do you know?

01-00:05:06
Baum:

I don't know. I think he trained in—oh, I want to say a sanitarium, probably, because I know when he was in Germany, he worked in a sanitarium, and then I think he worked in another sanitarium. That was still back in the days when they were—you sort of apprenticed and worked somewhere. I think lawyers did that too.

01-00:05:36
LaBerge:

How did he and your mother meet?

01-00:05:38
Baum:

She was going to a doctor, and one time her—she was very frail. Mother was a very fragile lady who was sick very often, thin as a bean. She was going to a doctor, and her doctor was absent, so Dr. Klug came in to take his place for one day, and that's how they met.

01-00:06:08
LaBerge:

In Chicago?

01-00:06:09
Baum:

In Chicago. And Mother was there going to school to be a—she wanted to be an exercise teacher. She was into health. Bernard McFadden she worshipped. I don't know if you know Bernard--

01-00:06:29
LaBerge:

I don't.

01-00:06:28
Baum:

You don't! You're very young. [laughter]

01-00:06:32
LaBerge:

Is this like Adele--?

01-00:06:37

Baum:

Adele Davis? Sort of. Well, Bernard McFadden, he had some magazines. He was really, he believed in nutrition, he believed in doing exercise, the whole thing, and there were a lot of magazines, and there were a lot of devotees. And Mother, who was so sickly, was always trying to find something that would help her. So she was going to be an exercise teacher, something that would work in the health field. After she got married, she dropped out of school. Well, I guess I wasn't born not too—I mean--

01-00:07:20

LaBerge:

Not too long after they were married, or?

01-00:07:21

Baum:

Oh, no, that's not true. This is jumping around. But I had a brother, who was born dead, or he wasn't dead, but he died before the doctor could get there. So that was always a great grief.

01-00:07:51

LaBerge:

Was this before you were born?

01-00:07:52

Baum:

Before I was born, yes. And I've always thought about that brother, I wish I had that brother.

01-00:08:03

LaBerge:

Yes. You were probably told about it, I mean, that was probably--

01-00:08:07

Baum:

No, no. But once Mother told me she was angry because she had gone— Mother came from Nebraska. Alliance, Nebraska. In order to have the baby, she went back home to her father and mother's home. When they called and said the baby is coming, the doctor said, "It's not time yet," and was so— didn't take it seriously. And somehow, in the birth, which was unattended, something went wrong and the baby died. So Mother was just really upset.

01-00:08:51

LaBerge:

Devastated, yes.

01-00:08:54

Baum:

And really hostile to medical doctors, because she had been a Bernard McFadden follower, and then to have this medical doctor, her old family doctor, fail her at the birth of her child, it was-- . Anyway, well, we lived in Niles Center which was a suburb, and we lived in an apartment house that was sitting out in the prairie. It was a funny thing. Here was this two-story, just two-story square block in the middle of the prairie. My mother had great, a whole big area that she could do gardening. My dad walked a couple of blocks to a train and went on. That Niles Center was later called Skokie. And you've heard of Skokie.

01-00:09:52
LaBerge:

Oh, for sure, I've been to Skokie.

01-00:09:54
Baum:

Have you? [laughter] It's all built up now, of course, but I did go back once, and I'm sure I found the apartment house that we—because it was naturally in the middle of zillions of other houses, buildings.

I was sent to—I went to kindergarten, which was near my house, and then Mother sent me to first grade in—oh, dear, why can't I remember the town? It was a place where all sorts of private education was going on, lots of--

01-00:10:41
LaBerge:

Evanston or--?

01-00:10:41
Baum:

Evanston! Sure. I went to first grade in Evanston.

01-00:10:45
LaBerge:

To a private school?

01-00:10:48
Baum:

To a private school, yes. Advanced kind of educational theories. We weren't there too long, I don't think. We went to, Mother's dearest friend had moved out to California, so she decided to take the two girls, and take us two girls, and go to California, which we did.

01-00:11:18
LaBerge:

Is this after your father died?

01-00:11:19
Baum:

No.

01-00:11:20
LaBerge:

Oh, okay, before.

01-00:11:21
Baum:

Yes, before, and why he died, because when she was in California--

01-00:11:35
LaBerge:

How did you get to California?

01-00:11:37
Baum:

Train. Train, oh, eating in the dining car and all that.

01-00:11:44
LaBerge:

Yes, oh, that was a big deal in the 1930s to take the train across the country!

01-00:11:48
Baum:

Yes, oh, yes, it was fun. And it was fun to be in California, and we lived near the beach, or all the friends Mother stayed with were near the beach. It was lovely. I don't remember very much of that.

But anyway, my father called my mother and said he'd—he was eating out in restaurants—that he'd swallowed something and had a terrible coughing fit. People had to rush and beat him on the back, and all that, but he was okay now. So when we came back—well, it was some time after that, not terribly long, that he suddenly became ill, went to the hospital, and sort of instantly died. They later ascertained that what, at this coughing fit, he had swallowed, because they dug it up, a barbecued toothpick. You know those big toothpicks they stick a sandwich together? It had gone into his lungs, and became infected. They had no idea what was the matter with him. This was just this undiagnosable very sick man. And it was only in an autopsy they found that out.

So anyway, he died by an unusual accident.

01-00:13:09

LaBerge:

Yes, kind of punctured the lungs or something?

01-00:13:12

Baum:

Yes. And then, you can imagine Mother felt terrible, because she thought, Oh, if I'd not gone to California, he would have been eating at home. So--.

01-00:13:22

LaBerge:

Oh, yes. And also, as young girls, that's very young to lose your father.

01-00:13:27

Baum:

Yes, it was. It was. But, Mother decided to go to Germany right away, and visit his parents.

01-00:13:41

LaBerge:

So how did you get to Germany?

01-00:13:41

Baum:

On a boat.

01-00:13:43

LaBerge:

Oh my! Willa, you had fantastic experiences!

01-00:13:47

Baum:

But that's the only way you could get there in those days. No airplanes. I guess there were airplanes—no, there really weren't. Well, 1933 I think we went.

01-00:14:08

LaBerge:

So tell me, what do you remember about the boat ride?

01-00:14:13

Baum:

Not too much, but I do remember that it was a lot of fun.

01-00:14:17

LaBerge:

Other kids on the ship and--?

01-00:14:21

Baum: I don't really remember that. Mother had been studying German. Her German was terrible; it never got very good. But she tried.

01-00:14:33

LaBerge: Did your father speak German to you?

01-00:14:36

Baum: No. No, no. Apparently, people commented that he was one of the only Germans they ever knew who could speak English without any accent. But that, I don't remember. I don't remember how he spoke. I wouldn't have known that there was anything strange about how he spoke.

So we had some little adventures going by train across Germany and into Czechoslovakia, and to the place where we stayed for some months, I think.

01-00:15:18

LaBerge: Really, some months? So you stayed in your grandparents' house?

01-00:15:23

Baum: Yes. Oh, yes, I forgot to tell you that as we were packing up and waiting for the cab to come to take us to the train to go to Germany, a telegram came that said my grandmother had died.

01-00:15:43

LaBerge: Oh!

01-00:15:42

Baum: Oh. My poor mother, I don't know--. Anyway, but we thought we'd visit the grandfather anyway. [laughs] And in the house lived my father's sister, Luisa, and her husband, who was a baker. So part of the house was the bakery, and near the basement was a great big place where they baked bread early in the morning. There was an apprentice who lived in the house, and he and my uncle would get up early in the morning and bake the bread, and then a little front room in the house was the shop. When we were sitting in the kitchen, which was the next room, you could hear the bell ring. That means anybody came in the door, and then Luisa would run and take care of them. We would go in and look in the shop. Oh, the shop had such wonderful cookies and things! But we never could eat any of those. This was, everything was very poor. We were all very poor. There's not a lot of money involved in— [laughs].

So we stayed in Germany for quite a while, and I learned to speak German. All forgotten, totally forgotten. Then we went on—oh, and--

01-00:17:14

LaBerge: What was your grandfather's name? If you remember.

01-00:17:17

Baum: I can't tell you.

01-00:17:20
LaBerge:

Okay. But somebody Klug.

01-00:17:21
Baum:

Yes.

01-00:17:22
LaBerge:

Was he a baker also, or what--

01-00:17:25
Baum:

You know, I don't know that.

When we were there, he was an old man, and sort of cracked. His daughters took very careful care of him, and he mostly sat in his chair all day in his room, which was right next to the kitchen. The kitchen was the life of the house, and Grandfather sat in this other room. Sometimes—oh, and he'd—Luisa would have to clip his fingernails and trim his beard and stuff, and he would swear. He would swear, "*Verfluchtes!*" which I think means "damned." It wasn't very bad, but Luisa was so upset that—and he screamed it very loudly and angrily, and naturally, we children, if we were going to learn any German at all, that was it! [laughter]

01-00:18:19
LaBerge:

Right! You still remember that one.

01-00:18:21
Baum:

Yes. The other thing I remember is "*schlagsahne*" and that means whipped cream. [laughter] That was part of—there was whipped cream in the wonderful pastries they had, had whipped cream in them. Sometimes on Sunday or something we'd get a great big bowl of *schlagsahne*. Nothing else, just *schlagsahne*. Oh, wonderful!

01-00:18:47
LaBerge:

What was your other aunt's name? There's Luisa and--?

01-00:18:49
Baum:

Oh, there was an aunt who lived in the house also, she was Emilie. It's not worth—none of these things are worth remembering.

01-00:18:58
LaBerge:

But you know what, your children might like to know this.

01-00:19:01
Baum:

Oh, they might, yes. What was interesting, Emilie was Catholic, and none of the others were Catholic. I don't know what they were, but thought that Emilie was sort of crazy. And I think Emilie was crazy. Aside from being Catholic.

01-00:19:21
LaBerge:

Aside from being Catholic! [laughter] Like, what did she do in the house, or did she take care of the grandpa, too?

01-00:19:27

Baum:

No, she didn't do much. Let's see. A lot of these things I can't really remember, but I do remember that she would go out into the forest and get wood, and bring back big bags of wood. That was—and now I can't think, was wood our only heat? I can't remember that. It couldn't be, but maybe it was. But anyway, her job was getting wood. When the war came,--

01-00:20:02

LaBerge:

I mean, you're a little kid, but were you aware something was happening, like war was coming?

01-00:20:04

Baum:

Yes.

01-00:20:05

LaBerge:

You were?

01-00:20:09

Baum:

My mother was very interested in events. I wasn't, but our family, which were German, I think—they didn't like the Czechs. They were in Czechoslovakia, and they were a minority that couldn't get jobs and things like that.

01-00:20:32

LaBerge:

The Germans were.

01-00:20:33

Baum:

The Germans were, yes. And where they were, everybody was German. They all hated the Czechs. Now, I think that sometimes they looked favorably on Hitler, who was just—1933, he was just marching around Germany, but he hadn't taken over yet. But I'm not sure of that. My mother I'm sure would argue with that. But they were not educated people. All they knew was that they were Germans and they were in Czechoslovakia, and they thought they were a German area and should not have been given to Czechoslovakia. So that was about how far their thoughts went.

Well, eventually we decided to go on to the rest of Europe, and it was about then, oh, we were going to go to Vienna. There was some kind of takeover, I can't remember what happened. I remember my mother being just terribly distressed, and we didn't go there. We went to Paris, and then we went to Switzerland and stayed in a sort of sanitarium. We kids—my mother wanted to stay in a sanitarium. It was a whole little city in the mountains devoted to health, and Mother thought she could stay in a sanitarium and breathe the good mountain air, and mostly she had to stay in bed. They treated her like—I guess the treatments of those days was like tuberculosis, which is sunshine and rest and so on.

01-00:22:19

LaBerge:

And what would you do while she was doing that?

- 01-00:22:20
Baum: Okay, so we had to go to another boarding school. There were kids from different countries there, mostly German. I'm sure it was a German-speaking part of Switzerland. We hated it. Oh, we just hated it. They were very organized, you slept in rows in your bed, and every minute was organized. We had to sit and do handwriting, where for two hours you drew A, A, A...
- 01-00:23:00
LaBerge: And this was in German, too, because you're still speaking German?
- 01-00:23:03
Baum: In German.
- 01-00:23:02
LaBerge: And Gretchen too?
- 01-00:23:04
Baum: Yes, yes. Gretchen just—oh, she just did terribly there. It was a sort of place where I think kids maybe were sickly. I'm not sure. Anyway, there was a lot of emphasis on eating. You were supposed to eat! And get fat! And if you didn't gain, I don't know how much, but a certain amount of pounds every day, every week, you didn't get to go on the big mountain hike. Well, my sister never got to go on the mountain hike, because she couldn't gain that weight.
- 01-00:23:37
LaBerge: Isn't that something!
- 01-00:23:39
Baum: Yes.
- 01-00:23:40
LaBerge: And also, that the mountain hike was the treat, as opposed to Disneyland or something.
- 01-00:23:46
Baum: Right.
- 01-00:23:49
LaBerge: So it was the exercise and the—isn't that something. But you did, you got to go?
- 01-00:23:53
Baum: Yes, I got to go. I learned to ski fairly well, and one day, I decided I wasn't going to stay there any more, and I skied away.
- 01-00:24:04
LaBerge: You're kidding!

01-00:24:04

Baum:

And I skied—I found my way to where Mother was, which was through the city and this and that, and of course, as soon as I got there, Mother sent me right back. [laughter]

01-00:24:23

LaBerge:

And how did you get right back?

01-00:24:26

Baum:

I don't remember that. I do know that people looked at me with sort of awe. [laughter]

01-00:24:34

LaBerge:

Because you were seven, eight?

01-00:24:36

Baum:

I was probably more like—oh, seven.

01-00:24:41

LaBerge:

That's pretty little to be doing that.

01-00:24:44

Baum:

Yes.

01-00:24:45

LaBerge:

Well, how long did you then stay at this school?

01-00:24:49

Baum:

You know, I can't remember that, Germaine, but when I tell you all these things, it must have been short times, these things.

Now, the other thing, we were always out of money. And let's see, what money did we have? My mother had inherited quite a bit of money from her parents, but it was the Depression, and her money was tied up in real estate and this and that. So she had a hard time. There was a manager back in Alliance, Nebraska, and she was always wiring him, "Send money! I'm here! And I don't have any money to pay these people!" This and that. Well, I don't know if he had any money he could send her, but it was always this constant hassle to get that money. She got an insurance from my father, and that was what she had to live on. Which should have been plenty, she should have been a comfortable person, except for the Depression.

We came home, we went—oh, I remember we had a good time on the ship again, and--

01-00:26:06

LaBerge:

Landed in New York?

01-00:26:04
Baum: We went to London, and then we landed in New York, and then Mother was still interested in special education, and she put us in a school, Rudolf Steiner's school.

01-00:26:24
LaBerge: In New York, or in Illinois?

01-00:26:26
Baum: In New York.

01-00:26:26
LaBerge: So had you packed up bags and left Illinois, like--

01-00:26:29
Baum: Yes, we packed up our—our apartment was gone.

01-00:26:35
LaBerge: So you were really vagabonds, in a way.

01-00:26:34
Baum: That's right. We were vagabonds for years. And I think eventually—oh, I remember we escaped from New York, because we couldn't pay our bills. Now, we didn't ever not pay the bills we'd gotten up, but we had signed, Mother had signed a contract to stay for a year at the Rudolf Steiner school, and she couldn't pay, that's why we had to leave. She was supposed to pay according to the contract for the future work. So we had to leave, and we always were sad we had to leave without taking all these beautiful drawings that Mother said were astounding. [laughter]

01-00:27:19
LaBerge: Well, what do you remember about that school?

01-00:27:22
Baum: You know, not much.

01-00:27:24
LaBerge: Okay, but you did drawings.

01-00:27:26
Baum: Yes. I don't remember much, and my sister remembers more, and she loved it. She was more the art type, and so--

01-00:27:36
LaBerge: Was that the emphasis?

01-00:27:38
Baum: Yes, sort of. Creativity, freedom. [laughs]

01-00:27:49
LaBerge: And what did your mother do while you were at school?

01-00:27:53

Baum: Just took care of us. Yes. And probably went to classes. She was always looking into something.

01-00:28:05

LaBerge: Well, where did you flee to from New York?

01-00:28:08

Baum: We fled back to Chicago, I think. Maybe stayed with some friends of Mother's. We stayed in Chicago a while, then we went to Omaha, and why we went to Omaha I can't tell you. Oh, I remember. I stayed, Mother sent me to stay with her girlfriend for a year in Omaha, and she took my sister to somewhere in Iowa. Marshalltown, Iowa. Because my sister had a crossed eye, and there was a wonderful eye institute there. So Mother and Gretchen lived in a little room or something in Marshalltown, and I stayed in Omaha with Mother's girlfriend, who had a family.

Then I came back and we stayed in Marshalltown a year, went to school there.

01-00:29:24

LaBerge: And did they stay because Gretchen would go through exercises for her eye or something?

01-00:29:27

Baum: Yes, she had operations, she would—yes. It was a traumatic experience for Gretchen, because she had to wear a patch on one eye, and kids teased her. They were cruel to her, and she was a very—she was shy. Anyway, that was for her a traumatic time.

01-00:30:02

LaBerge: And what about for you, what was that like to live with another family for a year?

01-00:30:07

Baum: I—this has nothing to do with anything!

01-00:30:14

LaBerge: That's okay!

01-00:30:15

Baum: The family was interesting, it was Mother's—the woman, Gladys, had been the, was the daughter of an older woman who had been on my grandfather's ranch in Alliance. My grandfather had a big ranch, and this lady ran the ranch. The daughter, who was Gladys, was about the same age as my mother, and so the two girls had known each other. They both moved to Chicago, and both got married, and Gladys moved to Chicago, and then Gladys had moved to Omaha. So that's why I stayed with her. She had one son [Norman], and he was a very spoiled and tease—he was about two years older than I was. And he hated me. Oh, god, he'd been the apple of his mother's eye, and I was really, I think she'd always wanted a daughter, and I was a good daughter. I

used to sit, and she'd help me paint. We all went to church together. I'd write my mother back great letters of what all the sermon was about. [laughter] So I think I was a very good girl.

Then we moved to Fall City, Nebraska.

01-00:31:46
LaBerge:

With Gladys?

01-00:31:47
Baum:

And still with Gladys, and my mother and sister came to stay with Gladys for a while. Then my mother went somewhere else, and Gretchen was there in Fall City, and we both hated Norman. In the whole of my life, I always thought, If I could just get back at Norman [laughter]--

01-00:32:08
LaBerge:

What was their last name? Maybe he's still alive.

01-00:32:09
Baum:

No, he isn't. [laughter] And after—actually, he came to visit me and I've gone to visit him. Their name was Hjersted [spells]. Their father was a Swede, I think, and he was a carpenter. The reason they moved around the way they lived, and again, you've got to remember that this was the Depression era, and there was lots of poverty. We were only an ounce above it, because we never had to be on relief or anything, but most people we knew were on relief. Bernard Hjersted, the father, would buy an old house and fix it and sell it, but they would live in it while he fixed it. Then he would sell it and they'd live on that money, and buy another house and so on. So they did move around a bit. But he also managed to buy himself a little farm in Nebraska, and we did go out on the farm. That was an interesting experience.

Well anyway, eventually, what did we do? We came to California.

01-00:33:23
LaBerge:

Were Gretchen's eyes fixed by going to Marshalltown?

01-00:33:29
Baum:

No, they never were fixed. No, that always was a very sad--

01-00:33:38
LaBerge:

Yes, to have spent that time and--

01-00:33:39
Baum:

Well, yes, and—yes. Eventually, there were a lot of people involved, and why we went here and there--. Eventually, we decided to come to California, and it was just because of health, again. My mother wanted to get to a healthy place. [laughter] We came to somewhere in southern California.

01-00:34:07
LaBerge:

Because there were friends there, or--?

- 01-00:34:11
Baum: A group of health people, and how she latched onto this, I have no idea. It was a little town named Ramona. Ramona, outside of San Diego.
- 01-00:34:25
LaBerge: About how old were you when you--
- 01-00:34:29
Baum: I guess I was just about to enter the sixth grade. I went into the sixth grade. We lived in Ramona until I finished high school.
- 01-00:34:43
LaBerge: So that was the longest place you ever lived.
- 01-00:34:45
Baum: Yes. And it was a rural town, not sophisticated at all. One movie house.
- 01-00:35:04
LaBerge: And the school, what kind of a school was it?
- 01-00:35:08
Baum: It was a plain school. [laughter]
- 01-00:35:11
LaBerge: But not like—because you had been at all these experimental things, so this was just a regular school?
- 01-00:35:15
Baum: It was a regular school.
- 01-00:35:17
LaBerge: Not a one-room schoolhouse or anything like that.
- 01-00:35:20
Baum: No, no, no, it was a regular—I skipped the seventh grade. I was in the sixth grade, and then I had to study all summer so I could get into the eighth grade.
- 01-00:35:32
LaBerge: Why did you do that? Because--
- 01-00:35:35
Baum: I don't know. I don't know. But—oh, I think one reason was my sister had skipped, when she came in, she came into the fifth grade instead of going into the fourth as she should have. I don't know why I skipped, but Mother's idea always was that the sooner we got out of school, the better we could go into college or something.
- 01-00:35:58
LaBerge: Well, also, you were smart young girls.

- 01-00:36:02
Baum: We were smart, yes, but we weren't aiming at getting anywhere, I think. [laughter] I don't think we had any goals. I can't remember that we ever had any goals about going—we did assume we would go to college.
- 01-00:36:19
LaBerge: So that was—I mean, not everybody went to college.
- 01-00:36:23
Baum: Nobody ever went.
- 01-00:36:22
LaBerge: And here your mother had gone to college, which was also--
- 01-00:36:28
Baum: One year.
- 01-00:36:30
LaBerge: But also, you had a father who was a doctor, so you had all that in your background.
- 01-00:36:38
Baum: In Ramona, there was only one girl, and that was the high school principal's daughter, who was ahead of me in school. And she had gone to college. She had gone to Whittier College. Then I had another girlfriend who was just one grade above me, and where did she go? She went to college too. All these colleges were up near Los Angeles, but out in the hills, so they were probably three or four hours from Ramona. They were religious colleges, all of them. I mean, not really religious, but—Whittier was founded by Quakers, and my friend Ruth went to a college that was founded by Brethren, I think.
- 01-00:37:37
LaBerge: Well, in the town and from sixth grade on, what would you do for outside activities, besides school?
- 01-00:37:44
Baum: Ride the school bus home. I mean, we had to get to—it was waiting for the school bus at seven a.m., and we had to walk down a long road, and then we'd get home about five, I guess. So you see, that was a pretty--
- 01-00:38:03
LaBerge: That was a long day.
- 01-00:38:05
Baum: --long day. I did music, I did piano lessons, and I studied trombone.
- 01-00:38:16
LaBerge: At school?

01-00:38:18

Baum:

Yes. Very meager, but there was one music teacher in Ramona who taught at the grammar school and the high school, and you could take any instrument you wanted to from him. [laughs] And I played in the high school orchestra.

01-00:38:37

LaBerge:

Trombone?

01-00:38:36

Baum:

Yes, trombone. Let's see. Oh, I was in drama. Yes, I was in some plays. I think I always liked drama.

And, let's see. I worked for the town newspaper, and we lived way out in the country. It was gas rationing, so you didn't drive anywhere. We didn't even have a car. So my way to get into the city would be the school bus. So once a week, I'd go to school, and then after school they permitted me in the school to use the telephone, and there I would sit after school, calling everybody in town who was anybody and saying, "What have you done, have you had any visitors, have you—" and then I would write the social news. And I never went anywhere or did anything about them. But, I was paid by—let's see, it was a year or two I was the social news writer for the newspaper.

01-00:39:51

LaBerge:

How did you even get that job?

01-00:39:54

Baum:

I don't know. I don't know, Germaine.

01-00:40:00

LaBerge:

But you know, even as I'm hearing this, Willa, I can see seeds of being social on campus and making contacts with people and knowing all of that. I mean, you must have been a good writer or they wouldn't have given you the job. You must have had to do something to get the job.

01-00:40:19

Baum:

Well, now, you must realize that one, the school was not a very high level. [laughter] And the newspaper wasn't a very high level either. And I wasn't a part of the town, that's—because those people had been there a long, long time, and so it was—I thought about this socially and thought, well, I was always in the social group, in the A group, but only clear at the bottom. [laughter] But I wasn't in the B group.

01-00:41:01

LaBerge:

But at the bottom because you were a newcomer, or you were an outsider or--

01-00:41:05

Baum:

Probably, probably, and also, I didn't necessarily follow all the things the kids did.

01-00:41:11

LaBerge: For instance?

01-00:41:13

Baum: Well, all girls smoked. I didn't smoke. Partly it's because my mother was always health-conscious. But partly it was because I didn't like to do what other people did. So if everybody smoked, I wasn't going to do it. [laughs] I actually couldn't spend too much time in town, because as I say, we couldn't get there. In my last year or so, the war came on, yes.

01-00:41:53

LaBerge: What do you remember about that, like Pearl Harbor Day? What do you remember?

01-00:41:58

Baum: Let's see. I did go with the A group girls, and my girlfriend, a couple of girlfriends, and spend the night in her chicken house. Her folks had fixed up the chicken house so she could have sleepovers, and I did get to go to those. I think we had a chicken house sleepover, which was probably about four or five girls, and then we'd gone for a hike. She lived in town. Walking around town somewhere. I can remember we went over to the high school and we were sitting on the lawn of the high school, I can see myself sitting there with a big palm tree and all of us gabbling, and somebody came out and said, "The Japanese have bombed Pearl Harbor, and we're at war." It was a Sunday, wasn't it? That's all I can remember, but it's very clear. We all sat there and thought, Oh, my god, what does this mean?

01-00:43:06

LaBerge: Because how old—I'm trying to think of how—that was '41, so you were fifteen?

01-00:43:15

Baum: Maybe, yes, something like that. I think that happened when I was a senior, because I don't think I went to school a year in—let's see, no, wait a minute, I started to college in '43, September.

01-00:43:37

LaBerge: And this was December '41.

01-00:43:40

Baum: Yes. I must have gone to school for a year and then--

01-00:43:46

LaBerge: How did the war change your everyday life?

01-00:43:52

Baum: Maybe that was when gas rationing and food rationing-- [pause] Oh, and that's when—yes, that year is when I took care of two little girls. I lived at their house, because when the war started, their mother went to work in San

Diego, in some war industry or something, so I stayed with the two little girls all during the week. We rode to school on the school bus, and came home--

01-00:44:26

LaBerge: So you'd cook for them and do all of that?

01-00:44:29

Baum: Do what?

01-00:44:30

LaBerge: Cook for them, and put them to bed and all--

01-00:44:34

Baum: Yes. We had to take a bath in the most awful cement bathtub. I mean, this is out in the country, oh. And when we went to school, sometimes we'd go along and we could see a wildcat watching us from the road. We had to walk down the road to the bus a long way, and—[laughs].

01-00:44:58

LaBerge: So you did this, Gretchen stayed home, or did she do something similar?

01-00:45:00

Baum: No, she stayed home. What else did I do? At the end of that year, school year, oh, I got a job as a surveyor's assistant in the desert. That was interesting too, and I just had to go tromping around the desert carrying a big pole, so that the surveyor could look across at the _____.

01-00:45:31

LaBerge: So would you sleep there too, like have tents?

01-00:45:33

Baum: Yes, we lived out in a tent. Another girl and myself were the surveyor assistants, and we lived out in a tent there, and [laughs]. And then what? Well, okay, then I started to Whittier.

01-00:45:49

LaBerge: Okay, well, before we get there, tell me about—what did you like in school, and whether you liked school?

01-00:45:57

Baum: Oh, yes, I liked school. I liked everything. I loved history, of course. I used to sit in the U.S. history class almost crying over some, I don't remember, it was something about a—oh, gosh—a tariff. A tariff that was obviously harmful to the United States that had passed, and there was a paragraph or so in our history book, and I was sitting there, Oh, poor United States, what a terrible mistake! I wonder what that history book was like, it probably was a bad history book that we read in there. But I did, people thought I was a little crazy, why I was so interested in this. What did we do? My mother always helped me with geometry and stuff. And all these things Mother didn't know how to do, but she would—oh, we'd work for hours on the dining room table

at night on these things. Oh, and what was the other thing? We had to write essays, and she helped me. And we went to San Diego, managed to go to San Diego to a library where we could get better books.

01-00:47:39

LaBerge: So you could take the bus there, to San Diego?

01-00:47:43

Baum: No, people who lived on the property we lived on, there were several families. Somebody would go in. Somebody had to go in, because there wasn't, we had to buy food in San Diego. We could buy food in Ramona, but if you wanted a lot of food or different things, you'd go into San Diego, which was thirty miles. Let's see, I know. We left out the big dancing. We took dancing lessons all the while we were in grammar school, and I guess we quit around high school. And that's when I switched to taking piano lessons.

01-00:48:31

LaBerge: What kind of dancing?

01-00:48:33

Baum: Tap dancing. I guess it was mainly tap dancing. And the lady who taught us was a widow, and her son was sick. He was an invalid. So in the room next to our tap dancing room, which was her living room, was the son, who was a bit older. Mrs. Matthews, and then every morning we came, because our bus got there so early that we would have maybe forty-five minutes before, from when the bus let off till school started. We'd go and we'd do these tap dancings, my sister and I, and then we were the entertainment for Ramona.

01-00:49:18

LaBerge: Oh! Just the two of you, or were there other kids?

01-00:49:22

Baum: It was usually just the two of us. We had little costumes, and we'd dance for the various clubs. Stuff like that. My sister remembers one time later when she was in Whittier College, and to get home to Ramona from Whittier, we had to hitchhike. I mean, there was hardly any public transport. We didn't hitchhike a lot, but from the last bus to maybe--. She was riding in the car, and the people in front were saying, "Oh," they were talking just to each other, "do you remember those two cute little Klug girls who used to dance?" [laughter] Gretchen didn't say a word.

01-00:50:24

LaBerge: But later too, didn't you take other—like folk dancing or something, at International House?

01-00:50:29

Baum: At International House, yes, I did. And modern dance in college, yes. Don't people do that now?

01-00:50:38
LaBerge:

I don't know.

01-00:50:40
Baum:

I don't think there was—well, my daughters took tap dancing. [laughter] I'd take tap dancing myself if I could tap dance, I might be able to some time, it was fun.

01-00:50:57
LaBerge:

Oh, my gosh. And what about your mom? I know she was taking care of you, but did she do other things? Because you have said she was so interested in socialism or—was she doing something for the war, or--?

01-00:51:11
Baum:

No, but she took in kids. There were—we knew quite a few people who were either broken families or people were—well, some were sick, some were in war work. I don't know. There was usually one, two, three, four kids living with us who Mother took care of. We were a big bus stop for the school bus. [laughter]

01-00:51:50
LaBerge:

So you grew up really with more people around.

01-00:51:53
Baum:

Yes. Yes, yes. A lot of people around. And we did a lot of cooking, I did a lot of cooking. And washing clothes, which was by hand. Eventually, we got a washing machine, but it was hard, you had to set up a motor. We didn't have electricity at first, or a phone. Oh, and I could shoot rabbits. It was a wicked thing, but I loved to shoot these rabbits, little rabbits. I'd get up in the morning early, early, and get a rabbit, and skin it, and put it in the salt water. And then in the evening, we'd eat it.

01-00:52:42
LaBerge:

Well, it was a way to get food, right?

01-00:52:45
Baum:

Yes, yes. We weren't starving or anything, but we were not wealthy by any means. We weren't any poorer than anybody else. That we never were on relief, that was unusual.

01-00:53:05
LaBerge:

What about other family? Did your mom have brothers and sisters?

01-00:53:13
Baum:

She didn't. No family. Of course, we lost all track of my German family, probably, or we did find some of them.

01-00:53:28
LaBerge:

Do you remember anything about the Japanese Americans—in fact, what was that town like? Was the town--

01-00:53:39

Baum:

There were no Japanese Americans, but, we lived maybe five or some miles from big strawberry fields. I don't know who owned the strawberry fields, but I know that Japanese picked them. They maybe owned them. So after the Japanese were taken away, there was a great call went out, "We're going to lose the strawberry crop." So my mother—that's what she did, she went out and picked strawberries during strawberry season, and that was a hard, painful thing.

01-00:54:21

LaBerge:

Oh, I guess so!

01-00:54:22

Baum:

You crawled along picking them, they're terrible. Oh, and every summer we went fruit picking.

01-00:54:33

LaBerge:

Just for food for the household, or for--

01-00:54:37

Baum:

No, no, for work. But it was—yes, it was part of the war. I mean, we never would have done any of these things.

01-00:54:43

LaBerge:

So what kind of fruit picking?

01-00:54:45

Baum:

Apricots, especially apricots. And we cut apricots, in the big cutting places where you get fast at cutting and putting them in to be dried. So we'd cut apricots, we picked onions. But I didn't do as much of that as my sister did. After I went away to Whittier, I got a job in the telephone company after school. All these things are due to the war. And in the summer, they sent me to different towns and put me up in a dormitory with other girls, other women, and we were the telephone operators. So I didn't go fruit picking in the summers, but my sister did. I had a couple of years of living in telephone dormitories, and a lot of the telephone women were from New York. This was a deal for them, because the telephone company sent you, paid for your dormitory, paid you a certain amount of money for your food--

01-00:56:07

LaBerge:

Sent you to California.

01-00:56:05

Baum:

And sent you to California. You can imagine what a deal this was for these New York girls. Oh, and one summer I was in Riverside, in Riverside was March Field maybe, it was an air force training [station]. Oh, those New York girls were all a-twit about the officers, oh, my goodness. They would only go out with officers. [laughter] And then they'd go to the bars, and I was about seventeen. I couldn't—I sort of strung along, but I was too young to go out with officers.

- 01-00:56:54
LaBerge: Well, we missed that part in high school: what about social life, dating in high school?
- 01-00:57:01
Baum: We went in gangs. That's what I always tell my daughter: Gee, it was a better deal in a way. You didn't have to have a specific boyfriend. Some people had a specific boyfriend, but usually there would be three or four guys that you knew, and three or four girls, and we'd all go somewhere, which was usually just riding around to somewhere. There wasn't anywhere to go. And part of the game was to figure out, because the guys, they always came in the car, see.
- 01-00:57:37
LaBerge: They got a car somehow.
- 01-00:57:39
Baum: Yes, and they had figured out which girl was going to go with which guy this day. [laughter] And it was always unspoken, so you'd sort of wait for them to come and pick you up and see where they made room for you [laughter] and then that would be your guy for the evening. None of this problem about going steady or anything like that. I kept telling Anya it's a much better deal, you get to go with a lot of guys, and you're not stuck with one fellow. Of course, that was just in high school. [laughs]
- 01-00:58:25
LaBerge: What about high school graduation? What kind of ceremonies or what kind of hoop-la or anything was there? Like, how big was that high school?
- 01-00:58:38
Baum: Oh, 100?
- 01-00:58:40
LaBerge: A hundred total or 100 in your class?
- 01-00:58:42
Baum: A hundred total.
- 01-00:58:42
LaBerge: Okay, so like twenty-five in—yes. And was that a major deal for graduation, then?
- 01-00:58:50
Baum: Yes. I mean, we went in the auditorium, we played, I had to play in the orchestra, and then we went up and--
- 01-00:59:00
LaBerge: Get your diploma.
- 01-00:59:01
Baum: Get my diploma.

01-00:59:02
LaBerge: And how many did go on to college from your class?

01-00:59:07
Baum: You know, I can't remember, but quite a few did. But let's see. The boys all went into the service. Let's see, what did the girls—well, my best friend was in, she went to college. Not the same college as I did, but then she did transfer over to my college within a while. I was sort of a forerunner, because when I went to Whittier, then a lot of other kids followed me in the next few years. The boys, when they came back from the service, went to Whittier.

01-00:59:52
LaBerge: How did Whittier come about for you?

01-00:59:54
Baum: Well, I think our principal's daughter went to Whittier. Let's see. I got a scholarship, but it was a teeny-weeny scholarship. It was called California Scholarship Federation or something. Maybe it was \$250.

01-01:00:19
LaBerge: But Whittier was a private school and cost how much?

01-01:00:23
Baum: Oh, I can't remember how much, but--

01-01:00:25
LaBerge: But \$250 didn't cover it?

01-01:00:26
Baum: Oh, no, no, no. That's why I got a job at the telephone company right away. I didn't know how I was going to go. Oh, but we never knew how we were going to college, but how--

01-01:00:41
LaBerge: But you knew you were going.

01-01:00:42
Baum: Yes. So I think that was the only, the little scholarship I got, which one of my teachers had helped me apply for scholarships, because nobody knew about stuff like that.

01-01:00:56
LaBerge: Where else did you apply?

01-01:01:00
Baum: That I don't know, but I'm sure it was just little schools around. The other--

01-01:01:06
LaBerge: You wouldn't have applied to UCLA, for instance.

01-01:01:08

Baum:

I don't think I'd ever heard of UCLA. The school that some people would go to would be San Diego State, and it was at that time—now it's a California state college, but at that time, it was really inferior. It was a teacher training college, and that's where maybe one girlfriend went there. So we didn't know anything about what we were doing, but this little scholarship, which I got from Whittier--

01-01:01:50

LaBerge:

Had you seen Whittier before you went there?

01-01:01:51

Baum:

Oh, no, no. Didn't have a car. [laughs]

01-01:01:55

LaBerge:

Didn't drive.

01-01:01:55

Baum:

No. No, no. Oh, when I got to Whittier, this was—oh, god. It was in a town, and I'd been out in the country all my life. I couldn't--

01-01:02:10

LaBerge:

Even though you'd been to Chicago, New York, Paris--

01-01:02:13

Baum:

Yes, yes, but for the last--

01-01:02:15

LaBerge:

But your last—you know, I'm going to have to change the minidisk.

[End audiofile 1, begin audiofile 2]

02-00:00:04

LaBerge:

Okay. So when you got to Whittier, you were surprised because you hadn't been in a town before? Or you hadn't been in a town for a long time?

02-00:00:10

Baum:

Yes. It wasn't that I hadn't been in a town; we used to go to San Diego maybe every weekend. But, to think, I've got to live with all these houses around me! It was going to be very hard. And Whittier, at that time, there were lots of orange groves—avocado groves. So it was not built up like it is now, so it was not a tremendously urban area, but for me, it was quite a shock.

02-00:00:47

LaBerge:

Where did you live?

02-00:00:48

Baum:

In a dormitory. I lived in a small dormitory; there were large dormitories and small dormitories. Mine was about twelve, twelve girls.

02-00:01:02

LaBerge:

Whittier was co-ed?

02-00:01:03
Baum: Yes. But not very much, because of the war. The only men there were ministerial students primarily.

02-00:01:18
LaBerge: As in Quaker?

02-00:01:22
Baum: Oh, it was—not necessarily. No, it was not Quaker, it was once religious, that is, founded religiously, but they aren't denominational. But there was also another college that had come on campus, and what was it called? Terrible. It was Christian, this name of the church was Christian. Anyway, they had moved onto campus because during the war they couldn't keep up their own campus, and they had quite a few ministerial students. Yes, so I did have boyfriends then, that was interesting, because they were such superior boys to those ones we had at high school. [laughter]

02-00:02:19
LaBerge: Because they were intellectual, or--?

02-00:02:22
Baum: Yes. Oh, yes. But I remember the first thing when I got there, I must have gotten there a few days early, and I went on a hike up to find a hill. I met two boys from high school. They were fun, and we went out a little bit, and I thought, Gee, this is going to be fun. Well--

02-00:02:47
LaBerge: And did they go to Whittier?

02-00:02:49
Baum: No, they were high school boys.

02-00:02:51
LaBerge: Oh, they were in high school!

02-00:02:51
Baum: In high school, and I was just—they were just right for me--

02-00:02:56
LaBerge: You were seventeen, eighteen.

02-00:02:56
Baum: No, I was however is the youngest you can be. So I thought they were great, until then the following week, whatever boys there were came on campus, and then suddenly I realized, Who's hanging around with these dumb high school boys? [laughter]

02-00:03:19
LaBerge: Oh, dear!

02-00:03:21

Baum: So it was fun. But--

02-00:03:23

LaBerge: What were you planning to study?

02-00:03:27

Baum: I think I didn't know yet. And in Whittier, they didn't even encourage you to—the first two years, they had a full program of—their idea was—let's see, some of the classes were like life science, and they had a mix of life sciences. Of course they had a history or social science. Anyway, there always were a whole bunch of things, not tightly focused. I thought that was wonderful. I mean, as I think back on it, I think it's so much better than the way these kids start into college focused on some teeny-weeny something.

02-00:04:18

LaBerge: They don't get a broad picture.

02-00:04:19

Baum: And they don't even know what they want to be, and sometimes they never get a broad picture.

02-00:04:23

LaBerge: Yes. So maybe Western Civilization or something like that too?

02-00:04:28

Baum: Yes. I know we had to take something that was art, and it was broken into four units. One unit might be sculpture, and it was only so many weeks, but we had to even do a sculpture, and we had to go to museum, and had to do things. Oh, I thought it was splendid. I always liked my studies. I didn't ever take anything hard like math. Oh, I know what I took hard that was just a big waste of time: all the way through college I took Spanish, I took German, and I even took some French, and you know, I'm not a language-type person. I should have recognized that and not done that. I could have learned something that I could have learned.

02-00:05:24

LaBerge: Even the German didn't come back to you or—?

02-00:05:27

Baum: No. I feel comfortable with German, I don't know the words or anything, but the layout, the way it goes is comfortable. So I don't think people should take things that they're really not tuned into. I took modern dance all the time.
[laughs]

02-00:05:50

LaBerge: So that was an elective? Or did you have some kind of physical education requirement, too?

02-00:05:55

Baum:

We had physical ed, but modern dance wasn't physical ed. Yes, we had always had physical ed. One of the things they taught us was just how to score a baseball game. It was just simply because our dean of women said, "When you get married, your husband is going to be interested in baseball, and you've got to know how to score!" [laughter] So I just was thinking about that the other day, because I went to my second baseball game in my whole life with my son, and he was telling me what some of the things meant, and I thought, You know, I've heard this before a long time ago.

02-00:06:42

LaBerge:

Oh, that's great. Did you go to the A's or the Giants?

02-00:06:45

Baum:

A's. It was fun, with my son to explain it to me.

02-00:06:56

LaBerge:

Well, by the time you got to your junior, senior year, then did you pick out a major, or did you still kind of have a liberal arts background?

02-00:07:08

Baum:

History. Let's see. First year, we had something, maybe it was social science. I should remember! Because I did brilliantly in that class, so brilliantly that the professor asked me to be a TA, only we called them coaches. Each class had about three or four coaches, and they'd break the class down and we'd have—just like TAs, a little group. So by the sophomore year, I was a coach, which was unheard of, and by the junior year, I was the head coach for his class. Sometimes I could give the lecture. [laughter] Oh.

02-00:08:01

LaBerge:

Would you remember his name?

02-00:08:02

Baum:

Paul S. Smith. Once he told me, he said, "You're the best student I've ever had, except for one, and that was Richard Nixon."

02-00:08:21

LaBerge:

Oh, my gosh! I mean, and this was before Richard Nixon was on the map?

02-00:08:27

Baum:

Probably. Let's see, I think about the time I was a junior or a senior, Richard Nixon was running for House of Representatives.

02-00:08:36

LaBerge:

Okay. But isn't that amazing? That is amazing. So did you have him all—I guess all four years?

02-00:08:42

Baum:

Professor Smith, oh yes, I worked for him for—yes.

- 02-00:08:51
LaBerge: So as you were picking out history, what were thinking by this time you were going to do with it?
- 02-00:08:56
Baum: I guess I thought I'd be a lawyer. Yes, I probably thought I'd be a lawyer, though I wasn't definite.
- 02-00:09:12
LaBerge: Just in that—in Professor Smith—who else both in high school and in college were influences? Like, did you know a lawyer who—or did you know what lawyers did, or--?
- 02-00:09:29
Baum: Oh, I went—sometimes new movies, movies were great, like Clarence Darrow. There were movies, and my mother, as I told you, my mother was a great civil rights or something, and she knew some—about lawyers. _____ professors.
- 02-00:10:00
LaBerge: Or teachers in school, or--?
- 02-00:10:03
Baum: No. I didn't—except for Dr.—Dr. Smith I called him, Dr. Smith. They called everybody "Doctor." I see that's not in style when they come to—when you transfer to a big university, suddenly the Doctors go out of style. [laughter] Let's see, what did I do in college? Well, as I say, I worked in the telephone company, and I worked--
- 02-00:10:56
LaBerge: In Whittier, or--?
- 02-00:10:56
Baum: In Whittier. And every evening--
- 02-00:10:59
LaBerge: So you stayed there for the summer? Oh, during school you did?
- 02-00:11:01
Baum: No, no, during school, I worked there from six to ten every day, and one weekend day, which was the legal, how many I could legally work. So I worked twenty-eight hours a week.
- 02-00:11:26
LaBerge: That's a lot, and to do well at your studies.
- 02-00:11:28
Baum: That is a lot, yes. And then in my senior year, I won the top scholarship, which was based on—I mean, the highest student in the class, whoever it was, got a full-tuition scholarship. There was one girl who was smarter than I was, and I couldn't beat her. But, she transferred to another school in the senior

year. [laughter] So I won that scholarship! I wish I could remember her name, because I'd like to know what she did with her life.

02-00:12:12

LaBerge: Why did she transfer?

02-00:12:13

Baum: I don't know that. I don't know, I only know that there was no way I could beat her, and she—I thought, How unfair, because she had a mother and father and a house. She at least had a family that could help support her.

02-00:12:29

LaBerge: But in any case, you got it.

02-00:12:32

Baum: I got it my last year, and so, I didn't need so much money. So I quit the telephone company, which I didn't think was going to advance me to wherever I was going to advance, and I took a job at the town paper. So there I was, back in my social—going around town--

02-00:12:55

LaBerge: Doing the social column?

02-00:12:56

Baum: Yes, doing the social column, doing the features sort of, like interview—interesting people would come to town--

02-00:13:03

LaBerge: Oh, you'd interview?

02-00:13:04

Baum: Yes, yes, sometimes, yes. And I did the police blotter.

02-00:13:12

LaBerge: Oh, my gosh. Much more fun than--

02-00:13:15

Baum: Telephone company. But hard—the telephone company was a perfect job for a student, because you just practically can turn your mind off. [laughter] You don't have to—you can save your mind for when you need it.

02-00:13:36

LaBerge: So would every summer, you stayed in Whittier, you didn't go back home to Ramona?

02-00:13:41

Baum: No. Oh, and my mother had gone away, and my sister came to Whittier when I was a junior, so she was a freshman.

02-00:13:52

LaBerge: Where had your mom gone?

- 02-00:13:53
Baum: She went off to Panama to a colony that was—she sailed away on a boat, and they were going to set up a colony on some island, which was going to be a nature colony, and they were going to have their own school system that was going to be far advanced and so forth and so forth.
- 02-00:14:20
LaBerge: How long did she stay?
- 02-00:14:22
Baum: Maybe two years.
- 02-00:14:26
LaBerge: Oh my gosh. I mean, your mother was really avant garde, wasn't she?
- 02-00:14:29
Baum: Oh, yes, she was. And as I say, she was exceedingly ill.
- 02-00:14:36
LaBerge: But she kept doing all these--
- 02-00:14:37
Baum: Yes, it was incredible that she managed to do so much when she was so ill. And a lot of the things we had to do, Gretchen and me, but mostly me, I remember, you wouldn't let a kid do, but—oh, I know. When I was in the third grade, she taught me to write checks and go to the bank, and get money, because sometimes she was too sick to go do that. And then I could go and buy the groceries and stuff.
- 02-00:15:12
LaBerge: Even in third—I mean, that too, you don't usually send a third grader to buy the groceries.
- 02-00:15:14
Baum: No. So some things I had to learn fast, because Mother sometimes was so sick she couldn't get out of bed for maybe three or four days.
- 02-00:15:26
LaBerge: And what about taking care of the kids at your house?
- 02-00:15:31
Baum: Yes, she managed that, let's see.
- 02-00:15:34
LaBerge: But you must have done quite a bit of that?
- 02-00:15:35
Baum: Maybe she was better then. I did a lot of that, yes.
- 02-00:15:39
LaBerge: Did you ever find out what it was that--

02-00:15:42

Baum:

Yes, and—well, yes, she had ulcers. What they found out now is that that's just an infection, sort of, and you can take an antibiotic and get rid of it. I thought, What a shame, that Mother struggled all her life with something that could have been cured.

02-00:16:20

LaBerge:

What other kind of things did you do as a kid that--

02-00:16:25

Baum:

Let's see. In college, I was in drama again. I guess that's all I was in. Yes, I was in SCA. It was Student Christian Association, and we were do-gooders. It was always a tug of whether we should—some of the people wanted to do religious stuff and get spiritual, and set up spiritual stuff, and some of us wanted to do, we were getting, what was it, raising money for food to send to poor people in other countries. I remember multi-purpose, some special kind of food that they were sending. I was active, so I was part of the non-religious group, and there was a kind of a clash between us all the time.

And then once I almost got kicked out of school, let's see, what was this? Oh, yes. So as an SCA-er and an organizer, we organized lectures, I think, and stuff. Well, we decided to have a lecture, we were going to have lectures on people who would represent different points of view on—so we had a capitalist, and who was the capitalist, or who did we select? And then we had a Socialist, and he was a Norman Thomas Socialist. And then, by golly, I got a Communist, a really leading Communist.

02-00:18:11

LaBerge:

And you're the one who--

02-00:18:13

Baum:

I organized this, and I can't remember what else we had. This was after the war had ended, so there were boys around, and I had some fellows helping me. We got the main auditorium, and we had one or two, I think we had the capitalist, he came. He was an economist, I remember, from another college. And then the Socialist; he was very good. That was another meeting, and they were small-attended meetings. And then the Communist was going to come. Well, I was also on the paper, on the town paper. The editor and the publisher—it was a very small one, they were about the only people on the paper—they had both gone away for something, some meeting. Anyway, so I was sort of in charge of the paper, of putting out all that was going to be published, so I wrote up a feature story on this Communist and on the gatherings that we'd had, and who he was, and that he was going to be speaking at the college. [laughs] And it came out on the front page of the Whittier paper.

And oh, god, that hit the fan! [laughter]

02-00:19:38
LaBerge:

So this is about what year, '45, '46?

02-00:19:44
Baum:

Let's see, I graduated in '47. It would have been '46, '47. Yes, it was when I was a senior, and that's when I was working for the paper, no longer on the telephone company. I can't remember what we did. Oh, and probably worse, I had some enthusiastic young men working with me, returned from the service, and they thought this was fun, and they made a whole bunch of posters, "Should we have communism?" and they hung them around the campus. You know, they were very enthusiastic. Right away, I was called into the president.

02-00:20:24
LaBerge:

The president?

02-00:20:24
Baum:

Well, again, as I say, it was a small college.

02-00:20:26
LaBerge:

Yes, and do you know who that was, do you remember the name?

02-00:20:31
Baum:

No, I don't. I'm sure it's all—I have a history of Whittier College. [laughter]

02-00:20:38
LaBerge:

Okay, so what were you told?

02-00:20:41
Baum:

Let's see. Well, first they wanted me to cancel, right away, cancel the thing. And then I said, "Well, that would be a terrible thing, that would be embarrassing to the college," and all this. We'd already had the first two speakers. Finally, we had to get all the signs down right away. [laughter] I think we had it, and we sort of fanned it down, and it wasn't—lots of people didn't come. I'm afraid the Whittier College students weren't much interested whether we should have communism—[laughter] Nobody did. I mean, there wasn't anybody that was interested in communism.

02-00:21:27
LaBerge:

Right, it's just you were trying to get some discussion going.

02-00:21:30
Baum:

Yes, right. And I do remember the Communist came, he gave a good talk.

02-00:21:39
LaBerge:

Oh, that is a scream! Even the fact that you were left in charge of the paper for a week at that age was pretty amazing.

02-00:21:49
Baum:

Yes, but you see, a lot of things, they run along on their own almost. And it was a paper, it was one with a lot of advertising. The man who was in charge of advertising was really the important man, and all I was in charge of was

just getting some fill in there, and the police blotter, and the stuff I always did. Yes, and I think there was quite a bit of drinking between the publisher and the editor. [laughter]

02-00:22:29

LaBerge:

And what about on campus, as far as drinking?

02-00:22:34

Baum:

I don't remember any drinking. Now, let me see, is that true? I don't know, Germaine, I don't remember any. There was smoking, which I highly disapproved of. And I can't remember, I think some of my girlfriends drank beer. But there wasn't any, as far as I know. But again, I didn't hang out with the A group. The A groups were like sororities and fraternities, but they weren't sororities and fraternities, they called them societies. They weren't affiliated. But they had pledge week and all that, and I didn't—I couldn't afford it. Not only did you have to pay, but you had to go once a week, and I said, "I can't go, I'm working at the telephone company." And they said, "Well, you just pay your fine." I said, "Wait a minute, I can't do that."

02-00:23:36

LaBerge:

You can't do that either.

02-00:23:38

Baum:

So I don't know, but I think coffee and cigarettes were the crimes that I was aware of then. And I tell you, I'd hang out with the SCA group, so I wasn't with the high-flying group.

02-00:24:00

LaBerge:

One time you told me, I can't remember when we had this conversation, maybe that your mother worked with Dorothy Day, or she was interested in--

02-00:24:11

Baum:

No, she didn't work—she may have met her, because I think she was there in Chicago.

02-00:24:16

LaBerge:

Oh, okay, she was in Chicago.

02-00:24:18

Baum:

And my mother was a great admirer. Dorothy Day and, oh, the woman who was a great social worker in Chicago.

02-00:24:30

LaBerge:

Oh, Jane Addams or--?

02-00:24:33

Baum:

Maybe it was Jane Addams.

02-00:24:38

LaBerge:

I'm trying to remember, but Chicago kind of was—a lot of things were going on.

02-00:24:38

Baum: Oh, a lot of stuff was going on, yes. Yes. Mother really never was terribly active. Oh, she did go to sit-ins, that was happening. Sit-ins on lunch counters, she'd go with a group of black and white people--

02-00:25:07

LaBerge: In Chicago, or--?

02-00:25:07

Baum: No, no, this was—and sometimes I get mixed up as to when all this happened, but it must have been while I was at Whittier. She belonged to the Fellowship of Reconciliation, which is a pacifist group. Yes. Through my mother, I met a number of guys from the Fellowship, conscientious objectors.

02-00:25:49

LaBerge: To World War II?

02-00:25:49

Baum: To World War II, yes. And so it must have been while the war was still going on, and they had a camp up there, a timber camp or fighting fires. I did go up there once or twice, met some of these guys, went out with some of those guys, but that was—oh, my mother's great dream was that I would marry one of those CO's, and there was one who was a printer. He wanted to be a printer, and Mother had him all picked out, he was going to come to the colony, and he was going to print all the educational materials. [laughter] It was going to be a wonderful, happy utopia. [laughing] I never was interested in any of those colonies or any of that. I thought Mother was crazy, and those people that go up to those colonies, that get involved in stuff like that, are people who can't get along with anybody. That's why they're leaving this world, and so they can't get along with each other either. They're bound to fail before—no matter how great their ideas are. Oh.

02-00:27:08

LaBerge: What do you remember about the end of the war, when it came and--

02-00:27:16

Baum: I can't remember that.

02-00:27:19

LaBerge: Or how it affected the campus, for instance, the guys coming back to school.

02-00:27:25

Baum: Well, the guys did come back. And they flooded into the campus.

02-00:27:29

LaBerge: I'll bet they did.

02-00:27:31

Baum: Yes. And they were smart. It was a great time, because intellectually, everything picked up. I had a great time, because I was a head coach. [laughter] So there were guys there, and I did eventually have a pretty serious

boyfriend who was back from the war. He was studying to be a doctor, and in fact, after I came up here to college, he came up, transferred to UC--

02-00:28:23

LaBerge: To Berkeley?

02-00:28:22

Baum: Yes. No, he graduated then, he was behind me, of course, in school, because he'd been in the service.

02-00:28:33

LaBerge: So you were up here, and he came up here too.

02-00:28:36

Baum: Yes.

02-00:28:35

LaBerge: Okay. What was his name?

02-00:28:38

Baum: I'm not going to tell you.

02-00:28:40

LaBerge: Okay. [laughs]

02-00:28:42

Baum: I didn't—we didn't get married or anything, and he has died since. I know he was an abalone hunter, great abalone hunter. He was passionate to go down and dive off those cliffs.

02-00:29:07

LaBerge: How did you decide—and we won't start this—but how did the idea to come to graduate school come about? Dr. Smith or--?

02-00:29:20

Baum: No, well, I wonder if it was Dr. Smith, because I came to Mills. I got a full scholarship to Mills, but why I applied to Mills or where I applied or whatever I did, I don't remember. But I do know I got a scholarship to come to Mills. Oh, I know, there was somebody I specially wanted to study with. He went to another college when I got here. But anyway, I--

02-00:29:54

LaBerge: It was going to be a graduate program at Mills?

02-00:29:56

Baum: Oh, yes. And the professor I worked with was Lawrence Sears, and he was so good. I was his TA or whatever.

02-00:30:12

LaBerge: And this was in history?

- 02-00:30:11
Baum: This was in Mills. Mills was like Whittier had been; they had a sort of multi-program, I mean. And actually, I got my master's from there, and it wasn't in history, it was—heavens. It had some slightly other name, which made it hard for me to get a teaching credential, because they'd [say you don't have a course?] [cross-talk]
- 02-00:30:37
LaBerge: Because it was broad?
- 02-00:30:39
Baum: Yes. [laughing] --have a course like that. No, I had good professors at Mills, and it was a good place.
- 02-00:30:53
LaBerge: When you graduated from Whittier, what did you do in between that and Mills as far as a job, or how did you get up here?
- 02-00:31:03
Baum: Oh, that would be just the summer. Well, actually, I hitchhiked around the United States with this boyfriend, and he had a lot of friends that he'd known in the service. He said, "We can go almost all across the United States staying with my buddies." So that's what we did. I remember we both started out with about \$100 each, and that's what we had. I don't know how we did it.
- 02-00:31:40
LaBerge: But that took you for the summer, the \$100?
- 02-00:31:45
Baum: It would have been impossible, wouldn't it?
- 02-00:31:47
LaBerge: Well, maybe not, if people put you up and then gave you breakfast, and then--
- 02-00:31:50
Baum: That's true, people did. Let's see, what did we go to? We'd have to go to museums, we went to museums.
- 02-00:32:07
LaBerge: That's a great experience, to do that.
- 02-00:32:10
Baum: You couldn't do it now. It wouldn't be safe.
- 02-00:32:16
LaBerge: And, besides the hitchhiking, but just to see the expanse of the country again, and—yes. Because you probably hadn't been back there since you were a kid.

02-00:32:28

Baum: No, very _____ [chair creaking]. Let's see, because I did, it was—went to New York. In New York, I went to Father Divine's. Have you heard of Father Devine?

02-00:32:43

LaBerge: No.

02-00:32:42

Baum: Oh, Germaine! Father Divine had a great colony in the middle of Harlem. This—what I'm saying about this is not worthwhile. I mean, but I did go there for dinner. I took the subway to Harlem, and I was by myself. I went in, and I had dinner there, and listened to the speeches, and this and that. This was interesting. I was trying to see what was important in this world.

02-00:33:27

LaBerge: Yes, yes.

Before we move on, and probably next time, any other big influences on your life, up through—who do you think was the most influential in that time of your life?

02-00:34:00

Baum: I don't think of anyone.

02-00:34:10

LaBerge: Your mother?

02-00:34:09

Baum: No, because she wasn't there. I mean, no, she was not around. Professors—Dr. Smith, I really was fond of him. He did certainly put his hand out for me, helped me with things. The same way when I came up to Berkeley, John D. Hicks became my—I mean, I worked for him for a long time. I was very fond of him, and when I'd even have, oh, problems with ROHO, I'd go to see Professor John D. Hicks. So those two were sort of father figures, in that I didn't have a father.

02-00:35:14

LaBerge: Okay, Dr. Smith, Lawrence Sears too?

02-00:35:18

Baum: You know, I don't think I ever brought any personal or anything to Dr. Sears. I did work with him a lot on what we were going to teach for this section.

02-00:35:36

LaBerge: As far as yourself, what were your political leanings? Or were you still kind of discovering?

02-00:35:45

Baum: Well, I guess I was always a Democrat. I do remember that I was very angry at Richard Nixon, because he displaced Jerry Voorhies. Jerry Voorhies was

our congressman at Whittier. Jerry Voorhies, I believe, was active in co-ops. I admired Jerry Voorhies a great deal. I didn't admire what Richard Nixon stood for, and I did hear him speak in one of his first speeches, and I thought, Oh, he's terribly good. He was a wonderful speaker. But anyhow, I guess I've always been a Democrat. I've not ever been a Socialist. Probably wouldn't even be as far left as Ralph Nader, but that's—[laughter] that's far down the line, that's forty years later.

02-00:37:01

LaBerge:

Well, it's a little after twelve, shall we rest it there?

02-00:37:08

Baum:

Okay.

[end audiofile 2, end of session]

Interview with Willa Baum
Interviewed by Germaine LaBerge
Interview 2: September 8, 2004
[Begin audiofile 3]

03-00:00:14

LaBerge: Okay, we're going. This is interview number two with Willa Baum, and this is September 8, 2004.

Willa, we were just starting Mills College, and if we have to repeat some, that's okay. But you said you were worried about what we're going to do with this?

03-00:00:37

Baum: No, what value it might have. Because nobody's going to be researching Mills College and find my tale, which is what I thought when I used to talk about the people we interviewed, that--

03-00:00:54

LaBerge: But even, like in the background that we already had, you can see seeds of your career.

03-00:01:05

Baum: All right, if it's—psychological drama.

03-00:01:06

LaBerge: Yes, yes! So we got you through Whittier, and you got a full scholarship to Mills, is that right?

03-00:01:16

Baum: I think so. I can't remember that. It must have been, because surely I had no money whatsoever. So whatever I had must have come from somewhere like Mills.

03-00:01:31

LaBerge: Yes. And where were you living?

03-00:01:34

Baum: When I went to Mills, I lived in Mills, at—oh, a lovely place, Chinese-built, that was called Graduate Hall when I was there. It's turned into several things since then. It was a lovely, big place.

03-00:01:55

LaBerge: What were your impressions of being at a women's college?

03-00:02:05

Baum: I don't even think of it as—I mean, at this point, I can't remember any specific impressions. At Graduate Hall, we had men. They didn't live there, but they all ate there. There have always been men in the master's degree programs. The men were mostly in stagecraft or some of the--

03-00:02:39
LaBerge:

Music or--?

03-00:02:39
Baum:

I can't remember the ones in music. I just mainly had some friends in the stage work, which I've known ever since, because they've been here in the Bay Area putting on plays. Let's see, what did we do about men? We had—and I don't know what the undergrads did, but I remember for our parties, and I became the social chairman, somebody arranged, not I, we had parties and we got men from the University of San Francisco, and from some dorms at Stanford, men's dorms. So we had a couple of nice parties that men were available. But it didn't seem to make any difference whether men were there or not; we really were—I think most of the graduate students, like I, had teaching assignments too. So we really worked hard.

03-00:03:55
LaBerge:

So tell me about the course that you were in, and then what you were teaching.

03-00:04:04
Baum:

Dear me, I wish I could remember better, because it was a wonderful course. It was a multidisciplinary course, and there were I think four professors. My chief professor was Lawrence Sears.

03-00:04:24
LaBerge:

That's right, yes. We started talking about him, but we didn't--

03-00:04:27
Baum:

Right. And another was Richard Current. I still read about him in the Phi Beta Kappa newsletters, still, he's written a lot of books since then.

03-00:04:39
LaBerge:

And what were their fields?

03-00:04:40
Baum:

Richard Current was just in American history, and Dr. Sears, let's see. He'd been a minister before. Oh, he was the most—what do I want to say—inspiring speaker, just like a minister almost. American studies, or something like that. I think it was called American Studies, but we studied some literature. And you know, I can't remember what I was supposed to do. I don't remember teaching any courses. I mean, when I'd been a teaching assistant at Whittier, I had classes, ran the classes. And when I was a TA [teaching assistant] at Cal, I had classes and I ran them. But I don't think so at Mills. I think I just probably had office hours, and hundreds of things to correct, because it was a very heavy essay kind of course.

03-00:06:06
LaBerge:

So is that where you got your editing skills?

- 03-00:06:07
Baum: Oh, I don't know as I had any editing skills! [laughter] Certainly I wasn't taught any editing skills, I don't know. But I had been grading papers. I don't know if that's a special skill.
- 03-00:06:25
LaBerge: But what was your master's in?
- 03-00:06:27
Baum: I think it was American Studies. That's what I forget now, and it was, as I mentioned, it was a problem when I went to get a teaching credential, because there was no such thing. You could be in history or you could be in English, but you couldn't be in American Studies. And I don't remember what I did about that either, because I did get a teaching credential.
- 03-00:06:56
LaBerge: Through Mills, or through--
- 03-00:07:00
Baum: No. I don't remember that.
- 03-00:07:03
LaBerge: Or through Cal State Hayward or--?
- 03-00:07:03
Baum: No, no. I went to—I eventually went to Cal, but I didn't get it through anybody. I think you just applied to the state.
- 03-00:07:15
LaBerge: And you had the teaching experience anyway.
- 03-00:07:17
Baum: Yes. Well, I think it was for adult school, so you didn't have to—no, I never—I started to get an elementary—this is hopping around—but at some point, I was going to get an elementary credential, because I really needed a job. And I had to do the practice teaching. I think maybe it was not just one semester but one year, practice teaching. And you know, I couldn't do that, because I had too many jobs. [laughs] I just couldn't take off that kind of time!
- 03-00:08:10
LaBerge: Tell me about all your jobs. Besides being a TA
- 03-00:08:15
Baum: Oh, well, at Mills I didn't have any job except working for Mills.
- 03-00:08:22
LaBerge: And was that a year-long--

03-00:08:23

Baum:

Yes, I was there a year. It took me two years to finish the master's. But I had only left a thesis or dissertation, I forget what they called it, and I finished that the following year when I had gone to Cal.

03-00:08:39

LaBerge:

What was the thesis on?

03-00:08:42

Baum:

It was a dumb—oh, wait a minute. I did two big papers. I think the thesis was on the Federalist Papers, the Constitution and the Federalist Papers. I remember reading all the Federalist Papers, and there were some papers here at Cal, but it was—isn't that funny? I wonder whatever happened to that paper. [laughter] But the other one that I wrote, when I was at Mills, I wrote a big, elaborate thing on why the United States got into World War I. Oh, and I read Charles Beard—I don't know, I read all the people that were opposed to getting into the war, and the people who were for getting into the war, and I decided we got into the war for just materialistic point of view, that we probably shouldn't have. I disagree 100 percent on that now. [laughter] I don't know, I'm sure Dr. Current was my professor, I don't know why he let me get away with that dumb thing.

03-00:10:00

LaBerge:

Well, you probably argued it cogently.

03-00:10:04

Baum:

Yes, very cogently, yes, because you really could have—you could really have cogent reasons why we shouldn't, yes. Okay, so that's maybe why I decided that cogent reasons aren't true. [laughter] Well, I can't tell you much about Mills.

03-00:10:28

LaBerge:

Okay. Well, you were only there, you only stayed there a year, is that it?

03-00:10:32

Baum:

I lived there a year, which means nine months.

03-00:10:35

LaBerge:

Nine months, okay. So in the summers and then after that, what did you do, and how did you make the decision to go to Cal?

03-00:10:41

Baum:

Oh, I wanted to go to Cal right away, because I did immediately go over to the Cal library to do research. Oh, I'd march in the Sather Gate, I came on the bus, and there were all these people speeching around, and all kinds of--

03-00:11:03

LaBerge:

Let's see, what year was this?

03-00:11:05

Baum:

It would have been the summer probably of 1948.

- 03-00:11:14
LaBerge: Okay, before the loyalty oath.
- 03-00:11:17
Baum: Yes. Just looked very exciting. I wanted to be there. And let's see, I didn't plan to go to Cal necessarily. I didn't know what I was going to do next when I got my master's. I did even apply—oh, that was for two years. I don't know where else I applied, because I was thinking of going to law school. The problem with going to law school was that I wouldn't be able to work at the same time. I did not have any money, or any support from anyone.
- 03-00:12:01
LaBerge: Your mother meanwhile is down in Panama?
- 03-00:12:03
Baum: Yes. I had a mother in Panama and no money, and that was the end of World War II. If I ever had an extra dollar, I sent it to my relatives in Germany. Because the end of the war had left them destitute. I didn't send very much money. I did send care packages and stuff, I did. So I can't—I did get a scholarship to Cal, in the history department. Oh dear, and now I can't—it was Archbishop—I can't remember the name of the little scholarship, but it was named in honor of some--
- 03-00:13:04
LaBerge: Of an archbishop?
- 03-00:13:07
Baum: Yes, I think so.
- 03-00:13:06
LaBerge: Like a living one?
- 03-00:13:10
Baum: No, I mean, it was like all the little scholarships that have names, you know, I guess the money was raised when that person died probably. So it was a smallish amount of money, and the cost to go to Cal was smallish, and I got into International House, and I can't remember how much that cost.
- 03-00:13:40
LaBerge: And this was to pursue the PhD?
- 03-00:13:42
Baum: Yes.
- 03-00:13:44
LaBerge: Okay. In history.
- 03-00:13:45
Baum: Right.

03-00:13:48

LaBerge:

So do you remember having interviews with people, or what was the process? How did you get admitted?

03-00:13:57

Baum:

I don't remember that, and it may not have been. It may have been that, they didn't have many women in history, hardly any, at Cal. But I can't remember it being a hurdle that you had to get over. The hurdle that I had to get over was to pass the French and German exams. I knew I could do everything else, but French and German I thought were going to be really difficult, and I did take a lot of language classes, and I never learned. I mean, I could get the class, but I couldn't learn the language. And finally, in a couple of years, I took the tests, and I passed. I always thought later, because I stayed trying to get my PhD for years and years and years, and I always wondered if I'd have to pass those tests again. If I would, I'd have to start all over again! Because everything else was a cinch, but oh god, that French and German! [laughter]

03-00:15:20

LaBerge:

Well, what were you going to concentrate on?

03-00:15:25

Baum:

American history, and I thought of—and since my dissertation—I was very interested in the constitutional period, and that was because my major professor at Whittier, Paul S. Smith, had been a constitutionalist. I loved all the courses he gave and how important the Constitution was, and I wanted to study that, and as soon as I—let's see. When I was at Mills, I was there one year, and then I wanted to teach American citizenship, I thought. So I did go down and apply to teach American citizenship and--

03-00:16:18

LaBerge:

At?

03-00:16:18

Baum:

It was the Oakland Adult Program. They had all the citizenship teachers they needed, but they said, could I teach English? I said, "Well, I speak English." [laughter] "Don't know if I can teach it." So I started, at the end of my first year at Mills, the second year, as I started my life at Cal here, I had this beginning job teaching English for foreign-born in night school. I did that for years and years and years, and I loved it. I had the most delightful students, and I got to be a very good teacher. They used to shift me around so that if a class was losing its students, didn't have enough students to continue, they'd change me and put me in there, and then it would build up. I wrote a lot of the material.

03-00:17:24

LaBerge:

I was going to say, how did you learn how to do that, since you didn't know how to teach English to foreign-born?

03-00:17:29

Baum:

Well...

- 03-00:17:33
LaBerge: Now people have to go through that class of teaching English as a second language.
- 03-00:17:36
Baum: Yes. Well, we didn't have any classes. The lady who ran the English classes in Oakland, she was a wonderful lady named Fanny Bulger [spells]. She would give a little session for the teachers, and sort of explain in one hour the sort of things. I think that's all we had. Sometimes Mrs. Bulger would come out to your class, and I know she kept telling me I have to write better on the blackboard, because the students have to learn to write properly! So she was our only help, and she was such a dear lady. No, I didn't really see the other teachers, because you just go off at night, and there are a couple of other teachers in the school building, but you don't really see them.
- 03-00:18:39
LaBerge: Where was it?
- 03-00:18:41
Baum: At first I taught out in, it was east Oakland, a high school in east Oakland. Later, I taught at another school in east Oakland. Havenscourt was a middle school. Then after that, I taught in Oakland Chinatown. I taught from, what, 1949 to 1966.
- 03-00:19:18
LaBerge: My gosh.
- 03-00:19:20
Baum: Sometimes in the daytime. In the summer I could teach in the daytime, usually just morning, nine to twelve. Oh, that was fun.
- 03-00:19:32
LaBerge: How would you do it? Was it total immersion: you walk into the classroom and you just speak English?
- 03-00:19:37
Baum: Had to. I didn't know their languages.
- 03-00:19:39
LaBerge: Yes, that's what I—and with all their different languages. Like if you have Vietnamese and Chinese and French in the same class, how do you do that?
- 03-00:19:51
Baum: Well, let's see. First of all, you'd have to find out if they know any English. And then you divide them, because we had one class, and you have to divide them four in the beginning, three are in the middle, and some are in advanced. So you put them sitting in different places, and then I can't remember, but I know for the very beginners who you had to say [speaking slowly], "I am Mrs. Baum," and then they had to say, "I am Mrs. So-and-so," and we just did a lot of acting, and they were very simple. I don't know, they learned. Of

course, they were total immersion, because they were here in the United States. No, a lot of them weren't, a lot of them lived in their own little world.

03-00:20:42

LaBerge: Like in Chinatown or--

03-00:20:44

Baum: Yes, but we did have—I don't think I had any Asians. They were all displaced persons, and they were all from Europe. So there were many languages, but they had mostly—well, I suppose we had, we did have some Mexicans, and we had Portuguese who were not refugees. But in those first years, first two or three years, they were mostly displaced persons. They were very bright, and eager to learn, and very respectful of their teacher. [laughter] It was lovely. I'm just mashing all these things in. Somebody the other day was talking about teaching, and she said, "It's so hard when you're teaching language, you have to be very upbeat. You can't be dragged down, even though your world may be falling apart." I always thought that was true, that lots of times when I went to teach, my world might have been falling apart. I was so gloomy I could hardly get there. But, the minute I went in, I had to straighten my shoulders and march in full of fun and optimism, and I thought it was good. It's good to be required to put on your best smile, because those people, you knew a lot of them were having tough times.

03-00:22:30

LaBerge: Exactly, yes.

03-00:22:30

Baum: And so it was fun. I mean, the whole class was fun. I'm sure I and the class, the students, were all putting on their best faces, so we did have a jolly time.

03-00:22:46

LaBerge: So that was one of your jobs while you were going to Cal and afterwards, obviously, until 1966.

03-00:22:54

Baum: Yes.

03-00:22:57

LaBerge: And who—did the city of Oakland pay you, or who--

03-00:23:00

Baum: Yes, it was the school system. I still get a pension, I think it's nineteen dollars a month. [laughter] For all the years I taught. And almost by the time I quit, I was thinking of going into linguistics, because I really wanted to study how people could learn English, or any language. But linguistics is very esoteric. It's not practical. I did, before I quit that little phase of my life, I did teach at Cal in the summer, they had courses where the students were coming in, the foreign students who were going to go to Cal in the fall, and they didn't quite know enough English, although they'd passed all the tests. They never could hear and they couldn't speak. They could read. They could even write very

well, but—and you certainly couldn't understand what they said, and neither could they understand me.

03-00:24:25

LaBerge: So you taught that how many summers?

03-00:24:29

Baum: Maybe two or three.

03-00:24:34

LaBerge: What other jobs did you have then when you started at Cal?

03-00:24:39

Baum: Okay. As soon as I got to Cal, I had this little scholarship--

03-00:24:45

LaBerge: And that paid your tuition and your--

03-00:24:48

Baum: No, no, no, no. It was teeny-weeny. Well, I applied at the history department, and I got referred to, I think, where every starting graduate student in history ever started, they all went to Lawrence Harper. Lawrence Harper was professor of colonial shipping, I think, but the thing he was doing, he was very excited about the possibility of technical help, technological help. He had—they were called IBM machines? No--

03-00:25:49

LaBerge: A typewriter, Selectric, or something like that?

03-00:25:50

Baum: No, no. They were big machines—well, first, yes, you had to type little cards, and the cards had holes in them. You had certain categories you typed, like he was doing always colonial things, so where did the ship come from, what was its cargo, where was it going—all these things had numbers or something, and so there were holes for those.

03-00:26:22

LaBerge: It sounds like the early computers or something.

03-00:26:28

Baum: It was far more mechanical. And then the cards could be shot through, and a machine that picked them out by the little holes. So then you'd have all the ones—name of all the ships that left from London. Okay, and then you could shoot them through again and see how many of these ships were carrying candles, or something like that. Well, everybody took their stint of typing those little cards or doing other things for Dr. Harper. I think computers came in and did away with—I wish I could remember the name of those big machines. Everybody had them, and they were big machines that [makes chopping noise], and the cards would go through on little trolley things.

So then by the following—one year, two years—well, maybe that’s what I did for two years. Dr. Harper, and the English for foreign-born. I don’t know, I don’t know, I couldn’t have survived on that because that wasn’t enough.

03-00:27:53

LaBerge:

Well, did you do something different in the summer?

03-00:27:57

Baum:

One summer, the first summer out of Mills, I taught at a playground. I was a playground director. And I lived in Fruitvale. Fruitvale was the section, and it was a Portuguese neighborhood. I guess I didn’t like it too much, but again, it was the same thing, you had to be on your jolly best when you went. I even had to go to a baseball game so that I could learn the names of all the players, the Oakland players, because all these kids would cheer somebody on, Come on So-and-so, and I had to know who So-and-so was. I could do that too. [laughter] Oh, and all these little children would hang on your arm. You’d walk into the playground, there would be four kids hanging on your skirts. Because a lot of people, even before the playground opened probably at nine, and before that it was closed, there was a fence around it. And there were families that put the kids over the fence and in, because they went to work. So the kids were there waiting. [laughter]

03-00:29:17

LaBerge:

It’s so different from today, where you have to have sign-in and sign-out. You wouldn’t dream of just putting your kid in the playground and leaving.

03-00:29:29

Baum:

No, although those people might have. Those were poor people who didn’t—weren’t able to worry about their children.

03-00:29:40

LaBerge:

Yes. I remember, though, as a kid in Michigan, there were these playgrounds that were always open in the summer, and you just went, spent all day at the playground.

03-00:29:49

Baum:

Oh, yes, and that’s not true any more?

03-00:29:53

LaBerge:

I don’t think so.

03-00:29:53

Baum:

Because right, we knew who all the kids that came, we knew them. They were there every day.

03-00:30:01

LaBerge:

So you’d have to dream up these activities or do the activities.

03-00:30:06

Baum:

Yes. It was certainly not my—anything I knew anything about. [laughter] I can't remember, maybe by the following year I was teaching in the summertime English for foreign-born, because in the summer, they always had day classes, and more hours. So if you teach, we were paid by the hour, and in the day classes, there were three hours a day, plus there probably would be twice a week, a two-hour evening class. So that number of hours would add up to your apartment.

03-00:30:52

LaBerge:

But you by this time are living at International House, not in the Fruitvale district?

03-00:30:57

Baum:

Yes. It was only the first summer out of Mills that I lived in Fruitvale and worked there, and then I went to International House. When I left International House, I moved to an apartment in Berkeley with my sister. My sister had graduated from college.

03-00:31:16

LaBerge:

From Whittier also?

03-00:31:16

Baum:

Whittier, yes. And had no place special to go, so she came up and joined me at this apartment. I think she got a job in the cannery. [laughter]

03-00:31:35

LaBerge:

Well, tell me about living at International House.

03-00:31:40

Baum:

Well, you know, I didn't think it was as great as I thought it was going to be. I thought I was going to get to know all these people. Well, it didn't work out that way. There were cliques of—and they might be persons from the same country, several from the same country, and some others. It was half Americans and half foreign. So there were Americans divided up, they always were with some foreign group. But it was sort of like, whichever group you got in, and that might be quite by chance, you didn't really cut across boundaries. And you could have, everybody was friendly. But I remember a few times I'd march into the dining room and sit down at a table that wasn't my crowd, and there I would sit, and nobody would speak to me. They just were so interested in speaking to each other that you could be a little island of nobody.

So I got in with, let's see, well, I had an Italian boyfriend, so I was with some Italians. He was in architecture, so there were a number of architecture students in our group. Okay, so that was the crowd I was in. And oh, I studied so hard. I really was not available.

03-00:33:28

LaBerge:

Yes, well, let's talk about your course work.

03-00:33:32

Baum: I can't remember that, Germaine.

03-00:33:35

LaBerge: And who else were your professors besides—was Lawrence Harper one of your professors?

03-00:33:40

Baum: Eventually, I was a teaching assistant for him. He was not—no, maybe I did take a seminar from him. My major professor was William Davis, and he was California history. Oh, and I had sort of rolled over into California history somewhere along the line. Who else? Kenneth Stampp, but I never took a seminar from him, but I was a teaching assistant for him. He was the most wonderful lecturer, the most cogent, well-put-together lectures you could ever imagine.

03-00:34:31

LaBerge: As a teaching assistant for him, would you do more than correct papers?

03-00:34:36

Baum: All the teaching assistants taught. Maybe three sections, I guess that's what they called them, sections.

03-00:34:53

LaBerge: So his was something to do with the South or the Civil War, Kenneth Stampp's?

03-00:34:59

Baum: No, it was basic American history. I forget what it was, but it was from the early days up till the Civil War, and then the second semester was Civil War to the—and nobody ever got past World War I. Dr. Stampp never—he hardly paid any attention to his teaching assistants. He didn't know what they were teaching, he didn't care. He had—I was unhappy there in terms of, there were about five TAs, and some of them were nice, but some of them were what I would call macho men, and--

03-00:35:51

LaBerge: Any other women?

03-00:35:52

Baum: No. So I didn't think he was a good teacher in terms of his TAs. He was a wonderful teacher in what he taught, and it was a pleasure to be in his sections. That was one year. And so then I transferred out because I didn't like the guys that I had to teach with, who were put in charge of other TAs. Then I taught for Lawrence Harper. He was terrible. In terms of, he was just in all directions. His course was going in all directions at the same time. I worked like a dog trying to get my sections together and try to put those kids into some organized fashion that they could find out what was happening in American history. But, Dr. Harper was very interested in his TAs, and he used to meet with his TAs and talk about teaching techniques and all that. He was

really a kindly and concerned gentleman. He just wasn't right on the mark in terms of what he was teaching.

03-00:37:22

LaBerge: Isn't that something?

03-00:37:23

Baum: Yes. Yes. And I guess it was when I was teaching, TA-ing for Dr. Harper, that we started doing the oral history, as a little--

03-00:37:40

LaBerge: Oh, tell me how that—what course was it and how did that happen?

03-00:37:42

Baum: It wasn't a course, but—oh, there was another woman, Corinne Gilb [spells]--

03-00:37:55

LaBerge: I've seen her name--

03-00:37:57

Baum: Many times. She also taught with Dr. Harper, and she was working on her PhD on the California Bar Association, which Dr. Harper was also an attorney. Dr. Harper even had cases, and his cases were always involving people smuggling fur over borders, things like that. He was a real specialist in all the treaties between countries, about things crossing over the border. So that's what he, he was oftentimes working on a case, which is neither here nor there, except that he and Corinne, he knew the lawyers, and Corinne knew the lawyers. Now, that still had nothing to do with—I don't know how come, but the Bancroft Library decided to do an oral history of Alice Toklas.

03-00:39:06

LaBerge: You didn't initiate this? The Bancroft Library was just doing it?

03-00:39:08

Baum: No, the Bancroft Library initiated it.

03-00:39:13

LaBerge: And who was the head then?

03-00:39:15

Baum: Oh, I think Dr. Hammond, George Hammond. Dr. Hammond didn't originate it. Oh, I know, it was Bob--[pause]. The fellow who was the head of manuscripts, I think. Oh, he was an eager beaver. He just had lots of things going. I've got to come up with his name! He became quite a famous historian. Bob—[Robert E. Burke] Anyway, he's the guy who thought of all that, and I think he worked with Dr. Hart--

03-00:40:00

LaBerge: Dr. Hart, who was a professor of English?

03-00:40:02

Baum:

Just professor of English, and George Stewart, who was a professor of English. Both of them worked on, I think they worked on California history. George Stewart wrote a lot of books involving western history. James Hart was working on a dictionary, I think, of California history, something like that. Anyway, both of them knew the value of the Bancroft Dictations, and so they had thought about that from time to time. So they decided, this was not a—they just decided to send a graduate student who was going to France for something, to send him with a tape recorder to interview Alice Toklas. That was because they owned some Gertrude Stein papers from when she had lived here in Oakland. So she was dead, but they thought Alice Toklas could tell about Gertrude Stein.

So, oh, golly, and Ron Duncan, Ron Duncan I think was the graduate student. So he was over in France, so he interviewed her and got the tapes. They were transcribed; I don't know who transcribed them. But it worked out okay. That's when I think Hart and—now, who did I say? George--

03-00:41:56

LaBerge:

Stewart?

03-00:41:57

Baum:

Stewart. Talked to the library committee. The library committee--

03-00:42:02

LaBerge:

Of the Academic Senate?

03-00:42:02

Baum:

Of the Academic Senate, and that was a faculty committee that oversaw the library. Somehow, they chattered around and decided they'd put up a little money and get a person or half a person or something to try out old Hubert Howe Bancroft's program, and get some current Californians. They must have been pretty persuasive, because they convinced President [Robert Gordon] Sproul that that was a good thing to do. President Sproul thought it was such a good thing that he put the budget, he put a little budget, in the president's—it was the president's own budget, but it came directly to the library, and it wasn't part of the library's budget, so they couldn't control it. I forget what they call that thing. Wired, a wired budget?

03-00:43:11

LaBerge:

It does have a name.

03-00:43:14

Baum:

Yes.

03-00:43:19

LaBerge:

We'll leave a blank and figure that out.

03-00:43:22

Baum:

So that's when we had a little budget. They hired Corinne, and she hired me.

03-00:43:30

LaBerge: Okay, and so did they hire her because—why? Because she was a history student, or she'd finished her PhD, or--?

03-00:43:41

Baum: I have no idea. We were just known people, I guess. Probably known because you hang around the Bancroft Library.

03-00:43:51

LaBerge: And did you hang around the Bancroft Library?

03-00:43:52

Baum: No, well--

03-00:43:55

LaBerge: You hung around the library, maybe.

03-00:43:56

Baum: I hung more around the library, because I was researching water in California, and that at that time was not much in Bancroft Library. It was mostly in the Main Library and official records, things like that. So we started, Sproul wanted Regent Francis Neylan interviewed, and Francis Neylan was Sproul's chief enemy. At that point.

03-00:44:35

LaBerge: What year was this, before or after the loyalty oath?

03-00:44:37

Baum: This is 1954, was after the loyalty oath, and that's when—I think before that, John Francis Neylan and Sproul had been very good buddies. But they eventually split on the loyalty oath. At first they were together on it, and then they split. And oh, having John Francis Neylan as your—if he was against you, man, you really had a bad time.

So I thought it was very generous of Sproul to make—of course, he thought John Francis Neylan would hang himself with what he said in his oral history, but he allowed the money in his budget to go to that, and that was--

03-00:45:27

LaBerge: That was the first one after Alice B. Toklas?

03-00:45:31

Baum: I can't swear to that, because as a matter of fact, Corinne did quite a few interviews with attorneys.

03-00:45:42

LaBerge: As part of this bar association--

03-00:45:44

Baum: Well, yes and no. We tried very hard, she interviewed them about things, not about the bar association, because we were trying, we were religiously

opposed to using the oral history money to advance our own research. So we had to tread the careful path of doing the interviews in a subject we really knew well, so that we could get the most money out of our knowledge, but it was not to be stuff that would help your own research. Corinne and I talked about that a lot.

03-00:46:31

LaBerge: Oh, that's so interesting.

03-00:46:31

Baum: How to keep those separated.

03-00:46:41

LaBerge: How about, before we go into more about the oral history, let's go back to what you were studying and what you were researching, like the water, et cetera. How did you get into the water issue?

03-00:46:56

Baum: Well, it was in seminars with Professor Davis, and a lot of our things were small. I mean, I can remember those seminars, and some of the guys were researching—one was doing rural free delivery, which is delivering the mail, which wasn't delivered to farm people for a long time. It made a lot of difference for the whole economy of the agricultural people. Some were on roads, and I was doing—oh, I did Hetch Hetchy, I think, Hetch Hetchy. There were a lot of papers there. And the reason, I'm sure, was because I had been so enchanted by the Tennessee Valley Authority. That was a shining--

03-00:48:02

LaBerge: Just what you read about it?

03-00:48:04

Baum: Yes, probably studied it. It just seemed like such a great way to take a benighted area and bring it in electricity and water and make a real civilization out of it. And we were going to do that in California, too. That was going forward at that time.

03-00:48:29

LaBerge: This must have been before the Water Archives Library was a separate--

03-00:48:35

Baum: Yes, I don't think that—I have no knowledge of that. And somewhere along the line, let's see. Well, Corinne was doing lawyers, and she had interviewed John Francis Neylan, and I had transcribed it. In the middle of the transcribing, I had to race off and have my second son.

03-00:49:03

LaBerge: Okay, so we've got lots more to talk about before we get back here. [laughs]

03-00:49:06

Baum: Yes, okay, okay. Well, I can't really tell you much about what I--

- 03-00:49:11
LaBerge: Even too the fact that you transcribed it, is that when you set up how it was going to—how we were going to then be doing these oral histories, what they were going to look like?
- 03-00:49:21
Baum: Oh, I'm sure. Oh, Corinne and I did lots of conferring, studying our transcripts, and figuring out what kind of questions might get an answer and what kind wouldn't get an answer. We were very theoretical. [laughs]
- 03-00:49:50
LaBerge: Okay, let's go back, though, because in your personal life, there's a lot happening, and you're still teaching—yes. So are you planning to write your PhD thesis on water? Is that what--?
- 03-00:50:07
Baum: Yes, but it had not boiled down to a small, specific something. I was just taking all the courses that you have to take, and passing the language exam. Let's see, though, okay--
- 03-00:50:26
LaBerge: What about Walter Bean? Somebody--
- 03-00:50:29
Baum: Walton Bean. Well, he came in with the oral history--
- 03-00:50:36
LaBerge: Okay, so he wasn't one of your professors?
- 03-00:50:40
Baum: No, he wasn't. He was California history. I wonder why—I guess we had a number of California history people and later didn't have any, in the history department. No, I didn't know Walton Bean until the oral history, and they had a faculty committee, a subcommittee that was just the oral history committee. It was a subcommittee of the Academic Senate's library committee, and Walton Bean was the chairman of that. That was because he was writing a history of the University of California. He was very interested, and not only—oh, here we are back into ROHO.
- 03-00:51:36
LaBerge: That's okay.
- 03-00:51:38
Baum: Walton Bean likewise followed the same principles we did, that you couldn't use the oral history money for your own research. He had some research money, and he had an assistant or two, and they interviewed some faculty members, and they were for Walton Bean's book. They were specific, aimed specifically at the things Dr. Bean needed to know. They were not generalized the way we were assigned to do. And I think most of the people we did didn't

have to do with Walton Bean's research. He was very careful that he was not going to use oral history money for--

03-00:52:35

LaBerge: For his own research, okay. Was he writing a history of the university?

03-00:52:40

Baum: Yes, he was writing a whole history of the university. It was going to be a major book. It's so funny, because now the whole aim of oral history is to have it used immediately for research, and it's the researcher who--

03-00:53:00

LaBerge: Who's doing it, yes.

03-00:53:01

Baum: And we always kept talking about how that was a bad thing, because you would naturally gear your stuff toward the questions you were interested in, and it would not be this grand, general thing that was oral history, that was aimed at trying to cover all the bases that other researchers would want to know.

03-00:53:28

LaBerge: Like bases we don't even know about yet.

03-00:53:31

Baum: Yes, right. Yes.

03-00:53:35

LaBerge: Well, before I take us back again, did Walton Bean's book ever come out?

03-00:53:42

Baum: No. That's part of the continuing story.

03-00:53:47

LaBerge: Okay, well, we'll go back to that later. Okay, let's go back to, how many years were you there at the history department?

03-00:53:56

Baum: Oh, forever. Yes, because let's see. Well, I started in 19—let's see, from '47 to '48 I was at Mills. From '48 to '49, and '49 to '50, I was in the history department [at Berkeley], but '48 to '49 I lived at I-House. And then I had my own apartment. In 1950, I got married.

03-00:54:28

LaBerge: Okay. Do you feel like talking about that, how you met Paul or--

03-00:54:32

Baum: Yes, that's okay.

03-00:54:33

LaBerge: Okay. So let's talk about your social life.

03-00:54:37

Baum: Well, I didn't have much. [laughter]

03-00:54:40

LaBerge: You didn't have time! Besides the Italian boyfriend.

03-00:54:43

Baum: Oh yes, well, he was a pretty serious boyfriend. Yes, so he must have lasted two years.

03-00:54:56

LaBerge: What would you do? It seems to me someone told me you did folk dancing and--

03-00:55:01

Baum: There were folk dancing classes at I-House, and they were so good. They had such a good man and woman who taught them. I loved to dance, Luigi loved to dance.

03-00:55:17

LaBerge: Luigi was his name?

03-00:55:17

Baum: Luigi, yes. We were in the—they had a festival, an international festival every year, and you danced and [both do your things?] there. Let's see, we didn't really go out much. He, oh, he was an architect, he worked day and night.

03-00:55:46

LaBerge: Yes, in that studio.

03-00:55:47

Baum: Over in this whole old architecture building, and sometimes I could go over and see him at ten at night and he'd be there with all his friends, drawing away. What did we do? Once we went out on New Year's to a Chinese restaurant in Chinatown that was a well-known—because this was a big deal. And I can only remember that we—it was a big deal, and I think we just went alone, not with a crowd. I can't remember a crowd. Luigi was a wonderful waltzer. We waltzed on the ballroom floor, and pretty soon everybody sat down and clapped while we waltzed. [laughter] I remember that. And part of it was that Luigi knew how to turn. On the waltzing, usually you turn one way always. But if you're a really good waltzer, you know how to go the other way, and he could do that. We didn't do all the fancy things that people do, where they go over each other's arms and all. I don't think Europeans do that, but they just waltz beautifully.

What else did we do? Didn't go to movies. We ate lunch together, dinner together, at the I-House. We studied together a lot. They had a library at I-House, but mostly Luigi had to study, if he was doing drawings--

03-00:57:39

LaBerge: Had to be over at the studio.

03-00:57:40

Baum: Yes, at the studio. It's funny, I don't think we did much of anything, that I can remember. I surely would have remembered because it would have been so rare. [laughter]

03-00:57:56

LaBerge: Well, then how did you meet other people, and eventually Paul?

03-00:58:01

Baum: Let's see. Oh, I remember. Well, Paul says that he saw me dancing in this festival, and he decided there was a girl he wanted to meet. And I think that's true, because one of his friends that I knew later, she told me afterwards that he sent out the word, he wanted to find out who this blonde girl in the dancing thing was.

03-00:58:41

LaBerge: And what was he doing at that time? Was he finished school?

03-00:58:45

Baum: No, he was at Cal, and he was in the engineering. He was a freshman in engineering. See, he'd been in the service, so he was--

03-00:58:59

LaBerge: So back from—on the GI Bill or something?

03-00:59:01

Baum: Yes, he was on the GI Bill. Anyway—oh, I know. Luigi went away for a summer. One summer he went back to Italy. Is that when I met Paul? Maybe it was the following fall? Anyway, Paul—I guess it must have been that summer, Paul called me up. He found out my name, and he called me up, and he said he was a dancer, which he was. He was taking lessons, he was in modern dance with Ann Halprin. He said he was a dancer and he was going to put on a show, some kind of show, and he'd seen me, and he'd like to talk to me about being in his show. [laughter]

03-00:59:58

LaBerge: That's a great one! [laughter]

03-01:00:03

Baum: So I met him for coffee, I can remember, one Saturday. I had a class on Saturday. It was in the summer, but I had a summer class.

03-01:00:12

LaBerge: To teach, or to--

03-01:00:13

Baum: I was taking it. And I met him for coffee, and he was such a skinny, bedraggled-looking fellow. He was thin as a bean. He had some funny New York clothes on.

03-01:00:34

LaBerge: Is that where he was from, from New York?

03-01:00:36

Baum: Yes.

03-01:00:36

LaBerge: I'm going to stop this and put in a new—

[end audiofile 3, begin audiofile 4]

04-00:00:01

LaBerge: Okay, this is going. Okay, so you're having lunch with this tall, skinny, bedraggled guy from New York who's in engineering. Was he really putting on a dance?

04-00:00:10

Baum: He was putting on a dance. He told me all about the dance, and different stuff, yes. I marked him down, I thought he was a very interesting guy, and maybe he'd be a good guy for my sister. [laughter]

04-00:00:30

LaBerge: That's great! [laughter] Oh!

04-00:00:34

Baum: And I remember we had to eat a meager coffee, because he informed me that he had no money. [laughter] He didn't have much—well, let's see. So that was in the summer. And then in the fall...

04-00:00:55

LaBerge: And so did you participate in the dance thing, or--?

04-00:00:57

Baum: No, nothing came of that right away. He didn't—or moved. I know—oh, some time in the fall, what was going on? I wanted to go to church in San Francisco to hear—I wish I could tell you all these names, because they're all famous people. It was a very famous black preacher, and he had a church in San Francisco that was multinational and so on.

04-00:01:38

LaBerge: Somebody like Cecil Williams, but not--

04-00:01:40

Baum: Yes, just previous to Cecil Williams. And so I asked Luigi if he would go. We could go and hear this guy. Well, Luigi didn't want to go. [laughter]

04-00:01:53
LaBerge:

And where was it?

04-00:01:54
Baum:

In San Francisco.

04-00:01:55
LaBerge:

Was it Glide [Memorial Church] or something like that?

04-00:01:59
Baum:

No, no, Glide didn't exist yet. It was called something Fellowship. All these things, I've run into these people since, and heard about them. Oh, so I called up Paul, just because I was mad at Luigi probably, or I thought he might be the kind of guy who would like to go. Yes, so he said oh, sure, he'd like to go, but would I go in the afternoon with him to Ann Halprin's studio where they were putting on a little performance?

04-00:02:39
LaBerge:

Oh, so it was a full-day thing.

04-00:02:40
Baum:

So it turned out it was really splendid. We went to hear the preacher, and then we went to the park where lo and behold, there was a dog show. [laughter] Now, if there's anything I love, it's dog shows. [laughter]

04-00:02:55
LaBerge:

Really?

04-00:02:54
Baum:

Yes. I love dogs! To see different kinds of dogs. So we went into the dog show, and then we went to the Ann Halprin show, and I don't think Paul was dancing in that one, I don't remember—no, he wouldn't have been. But anyway, he did exist as he really was a dancer with the Ann Halprin group.

And so after that I'd see him occasionally. And then I saw him more and more occasionally.

04-00:03:35
LaBerge:

And did Luigi go back to--

04-00:03:36
Baum:

Well, Luigi came back. No, he came back to the United States, and—well, I don't know. I guess I just—we never were going steady, never we had any—in our days, we didn't do that. If you weren't engaged with a ring, you were free. [laughter] So I just hate this idea that the young people have now, you go steady with somebody for two weeks.

04-00:04:14
LaBerge:

Yes. So this is all in about 1950 to--

04-00:04:18
Baum: It must have been 1949. Paul and I were married in 1950, in August of 1950. So--

04-00:04:31
LaBerge: And where did you get married?

04-00:04:33
Baum: At the Unitarian church in Berkeley. Which was on campus—it was the church that was on campus at that time. Or the campus ate it up, probably gobbled up the church.

04-00:04:50
LaBerge: Okay, so then it—is there one now? There must be a Unitarian church someplace else.

04-00:04:56
Baum: The church is still there, and it's the dance studio now. It's a beautiful church.

04-00:05:03
LaBerge: Oh, the dance studio down on--

04-00:05:07
Baum: Before you go in the gym.

04-00:05:11
LaBerge: Yes, oh. So it's a Maybeck or something, is it, or--?

04-00:05:13
Baum: It's not a Maybeck, but it's another well-known architect. Oh, the church was beautiful. And, we were also married in a Jewish church, Jewish synagogue, in San Francisco on the same day. That was because Paul's parents, they were so distressed that he was marrying a non-Jew, they were just broken-hearted. So finally, we said, well, we'd be married in the Jewish church too. So then we had to speed over there.

04-00:05:58
LaBerge: Did his parents come?

04-00:05:59
Baum: No, they didn't come. I don't think people traveled much in those days.

04-00:06:04
LaBerge: And did your mother come?

04-00:06:05
Baum: Oh, yes, my mother was there. Oh, my mother had arrived back from Panama probably two months before we got married.

04-00:06:16
LaBerge: And lived where?

04-00:06:17
Baum: In our apartment.

04-00:06:19
LaBerge: Oh, okay, so lived with you?

04-00:06:20
Baum: Yes, in the apartment my sister and I had.

04-00:06:27
LaBerge: So had Paul's parents ever met you?

04-00:06:31
Baum: No. Oh, no, they didn't—they didn't object to me personally, they didn't--

04-00:06:36
LaBerge: It was just that you weren't Jewish.

04-00:06:38
Baum: Yes. But they really were--

04-00:06:41
LaBerge: So you went over to San Francisco, and was that a problem—well, either way was it a problem for you to be married in a Unitarian church because he was Jewish, or because you were not Jewish at the synagogue?

04-00:06:52
Baum: No. At the Unitarian church, of course it's no problem. But at the—we had Ann Halprin was—she wanted us to be married by a cantor—oh, again, in the Jewish scene, god, he was so popular. She adored him. He wouldn't marry us, because a lot of rabbis wouldn't marry a mixed marriage. But he got us a rabbi that would.

04-00:07:31
LaBerge: So did you have all of the traditional Jewish ceremony, with the stamping of the glass and all of that?

04-00:07:42
Baum: Yes.

04-00:07:42
LaBerge: Oh, how great.

04-00:07:44
Baum: It was kind of small affair. We had—who did we have? We probably had ten or twelve guests at the Unitarian church, and then the same guests and Paul's aunt and uncle lived in Alameda and they came, and his uncle was the best man. So a few of—he had a relative or two, and a friend or two. But we were a small group.

04-00:08:15
LaBerge: Was Gretchen your maid of honor?

- 04-00:08:15
Baum: Yes.
- 04-00:08:19
LaBerge: Did someone walk you down the aisle, or--?
- 04-00:08:22
Baum: I don't think so. I can't remember that.
- 04-00:08:29
LaBerge: So that's quite a big date. So, then where were you and Paul living after that?
- 04-00:08:39
Baum: Right one block from here, we rented an apartment, had a lovely apartment, and we lived in it quite a while.
- 04-00:08:47
LaBerge: And what were you both doing by this time, as far as school? You're still in the history department.
- 04-00:08:54
Baum: I'm still in the history department. Oh, that's when—I know, just when we got married is when I got my TA-ship. The TA-ship paid \$100 a month, which was almost enough to live on. Our rent in our apartment was fifty dollars. Oh, I know what, Paul was teaching dancing then in children's schools, in private schools. He had dancing classes for boys. Some years he worked as a waiter in Larry Blake's. And what else did he do? He always worked at the post office every Christmas.
- 04-00:09:48
LaBerge: I wonder if they do that any more, add on more people.
- 04-00:09:52
Baum: I don't know. They'd have to, don't you think?
- 04-00:09:54
LaBerge: Yes, you'd think so. Was he still in engineering school?
- 04-00:10:00
Baum: No. He had quit engineering, and he quit because he decided he didn't like engineers. And that he didn't like to go around with engineers. He loved engineering, he was always very inventive, but he didn't like engineers. So he decided he'd have to switch to—I guess he did psychology, I think was what his undergraduate---. But when we were married, let me see. He was still an undergraduate.
- 04-00:10:40
LaBerge: So then he got his B.A. in psychology, or was it a B.S.?
- 04-00:10:47
Baum: I don't know.

04-00:10:49
LaBerge: But you were able to live on all these jobs?

04-00:10:54
Baum: Our little--

04-00:10:55
LaBerge: And your TA-ship.

04-00:10:56
Baum: Our little place, yes. And I was annoyed, because his GI Bill ran out just when we got married.

04-00:11:06
LaBerge: Oh, I didn't know it could run out.

04-00:11:08
Baum: Oh, it had to do with how long you were in the service.

04-00:11:11
LaBerge: Oh, okay, you got so many months for so many months.

04-00:11:12
Baum: Yes. So I said, Gee whiz, he could have gotten money for a married man. Instead he got—I mean, he used up all his smallest amount of money. [laughs]

04-00:11:29
LaBerge: I was so interested that he was in engineering, because I knew that he was a psychologist at the end, how that happened.

04-00:11:36
Baum: Yes, but he was really thinking of being a dancer. But he was interested—oh, because he taught these boys, he taught a lot of boys, a lot of private schools. Some of those kids were, they loved dancing, oh, god. They did Indian things and they did all sorts of stuff. He thought he would like to be a dance therapist. Although he was quite a good dancer. He could have been a professional dancer probably.

04-00:12:21
LaBerge: Modern, or--?

04-00:12:21
Baum: Modern, modern. And that's probably because, while he was very good, there aren't that many men in dance, and you don't have to be as good as a man as if you were one of those girls that started at five. So that was his goal. And he also, he took jewelry-making. Night school or something. He got very good at that, and he thought he might even become a professional jeweler.

04-00:13:06
LaBerge: Is that like some of—because you have a lot of unusual jewelry. Is some of it what he made?

04-00:13:11

Baum: Some of it, yes. We always admired Malca's jewelry, because her husband, Harold, made beautiful things.

04-00:13:25

LaBerge: Oh, yes. Well, how did all—why don't we finish with this, because I think your kids would love to hear this. How did then he go to graduate school?

04-00:13:39

Baum: I think it was two years after we were married before he graduated from the BA, and by then—oh, I know what he was doing. In the summers, he did blister rust. Do you know what blister rust is?

04-00:14:01

LaBerge: No.

04-00:14:02

Baum: Well, it was a—you go out in the forest, you work for the Forest Service, and you go way up in the forest, and there is a disease which attacks lumber trees. It's called blister rust; it's a fungus. It kills the trees. The fungus grows on currant bushes, and currants, wild currants, are all over in the forests. Okay, so he and a friend, several friends, they would bid. You go up to the forest, and the Forest Service puts out contracts. You go and you have to look at the land, and then estimate how much it would cost you to pull out, to get out every currant bush in this area. Okay, so he and Lou Wiggin, who was his friend, they would go up and bid, and then they would go up to the forest, and way up, there were no roads. They had to dig out certain of these bushes. Then, when it was all dug out, then the Forest Service would come and inspect. If they didn't find any currants, you got your money. If they found a currant, you didn't get your money. So it was a gamble.

Oh, and I was supporting the gamble. I said—oh, yes, I was the—well, that was the one summer I had a job in—I was a secretary somewhere.

04-00:15:56

LaBerge: Just at an office?

04-00:15:57

Baum: It was Air Reduction Office, it was really interesting. In Emeryville, it was really interesting. But that was the second year of our marriage, and I was pregnant, and so I quit school. The reason was that I was embarrassed to be pregnant. Now, see, those were different times.

04-00:16:17

LaBerge: Oh, really different times.

04-00:16:19

Baum: Because later on--

04-00:16:19
LaBerge:

No one told you you had to quit?

04-00:16:20
Baum:

Oh, no. No, the first—let's see. It was right when I found out I was, it was the beginning of the spring semester, 1952, I guess. As soon as I found out I was pregnant, I thought, Oh, my god, I'm not going to walk around this campus pregnant! What an awful thing.

04-00:16:47
LaBerge:

Oh, my gosh!

04-00:16:48
Baum:

Oh, times were really different. And so I quit immediately, and then I got this secretary job, which I could get because I didn't look pregnant, and I was trying so hard to get a job where they'd put me in the back room. And immediately, they decided, "Well, you can be our receptionist." [laughter] They kept trying to put me in front. Finally, I did get a—and then I turned the job down. But I did get a job in Air Reduction, and it was in their main office, but I wasn't up in the front meeting the whole of the guests. [laughs] And then my money supported Paul and Lou, who had to buy their food and tent and everything up in the forest, and then supposedly they were going to get all this money.

04-00:17:43
LaBerge:

And did they?

04-00:17:43
Baum:

Yes, but that had a little snag too. Because let's see, well, we were going to go, Marc, the baby, was due in September.

04-00:18:02
LaBerge:

Okay, and this is your first.

04-00:18:02
Baum:

This is my first. We were going to drive to New York and see his folks. Then we were going to go to Europe. Paul was bragging about, we were going to take our baby in a little knapsack, and we were going to go to Europe, it was such a good thing. I kept saying, "Paul, don't say anything like that! We don't even know! We just don't know what's going to happen. When we get there, we'll send everybody a letter and say we're here." Brag, brag, brag. [laughter] Well, what happened was that the winter came early that year, and in September, it snowed.

04-00:18:44
LaBerge:

You're kidding—here?

04-00:18:45
Baum:

Not here, but on the mountains.

04-00:18:48

LaBerge: Oh, while they're up there working. Yes.

04-00:18:50

Baum: And it snowed, and the Forest Service couldn't go in and check to see if there were any currants. So we couldn't get paid until they would be able to check, would be in the spring after the snow melted. So all the money we were going to go to Europe with didn't appear.

Now, another thing that happened, let's see, I've left that out somehow: Paul became ill. He became terribly ill, it was September, October. It was election day--

04-00:19:28

LaBerge: Like after Marc was born?

04-00:19:28

Baum: Yes, Marc was just a teeny infant. We were all living at my mother's, in the apartment that then became my mother's and sister's apartment. Paul was deathly ill, and he'd signed up to serve on the election, as a poll watcher, whatever. And he couldn't get up, couldn't go. So I said, "Okay, I'll take your job," so I put Marc in his little basket and went to the polling place. That was a first for the poll watchers, too. I mean, as I say, this was a different time. I think now there probably are zillions of babies sitting around everywhere, but in those--

04-00:20:16

LaBerge: And the number of pregnant women walking around campus, too.

04-00:20:20

Baum: Oh, yes. [laughter] Anyway, Paul was seriously ill. He had—well, they didn't know what he had yet. He was seriously ill, and then he got better. Then we drove to New York, all the way, with Marc in his little basket. And then when we go to New York, Paul was going to get a job. Well, I don't know, it must have been a time when there were no jobs. There were just no jobs.

04-00:20:56

LaBerge: And is this New York City or some--

04-00:21:00

Baum: His parents lived in Flushing, which is in Queens. They had an apartment there and we stayed with them.

04-00:21:10

LaBerge: How did they accept you in person, and the new baby?

04-00:21:15

Baum: Oh, they were very nice. Oh, they were very nice, and of course, they loved the baby, but there was a lot of quacking, so we were there in the winter. Got there about October or November. Everybody in New York is worried about

your baby having enough clothes on. They'd go on and on, because I didn't have any shoes for Marc, or I didn't hardly have shoes for him. I didn't—and they had a nice warm apartment with big plush carpets and all that, but no no—oh, I kind of clashed with the New York crowd on how you take care of babies. [laughter]

And also, I was nursing the baby, and Paul's mother kept trying to get a special dairy that would bring—that they could deliver special milk to us, not pasteurized or something, and Paul had to blow her up. He said, "Mother, the baby has milk, and don't—" Because I think it was right at a period when mothers didn't nurse. It was kind of low class.

04-00:22:30

LaBerge: You were supposed to have formula.

04-00:22:31

Baum: Yes, right. Yes, so that embarrassed his mother. But of course, that's why we could travel, we could go anywhere, as long as--

04-00:22:44

LaBerge: Yes, that's the easiest time.

04-00:22:44

Baum: Right. Eventually, Paul got a job door-to-door selling baby-tendas, and I think he made no money on that, or nothing—baby-tendas, do you know what a baby-tenda is?

04-00:23:01

LaBerge: No.

04-00:23:01

Baum: Well, they were big in those days. It was a little table about this big with a hole in the middle where sat your baby--

04-00:23:10

LaBerge: Okay, and could they kind of walk if they--

04-00:23:11

Baum: No. No, it was just a table, it didn't have wheels. But it had enough space around that the baby could throw his food around and it probably wouldn't get to anywhere. Okay, it was just a play table, sort of.

04-00:23:26

LaBerge: Okay. And the baby couldn't get out either.

04-00:23:28

Baum: No.

04-00:23:27

LaBerge: So it was safe.

- 04-00:23:28
Baum: It was safe, so you put it--
- 04-00:23:32
LaBerge: Like a playpen.
- 04-00:23:30
Baum: Yes, it was like a playpen, and the kid—he had little toys that stuck on the table, you fed him there, okay, and it was very fancy and very expensive, and I think Paul sold one to his brother [laughter]. But then he got a job as a jeweler in a jewelry manufacturing, which was just a little shop in Greenwich Village. He was doing splendid there.
- 04-00:24:03
LaBerge: Were you still living with his parents?
- 04-00:24:05
Baum: Yes. It was just a few months, it seemed like a century, though.
- 04-00:24:12
LaBerge: Because you were just taking care of the baby, and being home with his mother or something.
- 04-00:24:14
Baum: I was just taking care of the baby, and it was so boring. I thought—it's the only time in my life I ever watched television. So boring. I guess I couldn't—well, I couldn't get a job, because I had the baby.
- 04-00:24:31
LaBerge: Yes, and there you are at his parents' house with his mom. And what kind of experience did you have with babies?
- 04-00:24:42
Baum: None.
- 04-00:24:41
LaBerge: None. So how did you learn? Did you read Dr. Spock, or how did you learn?
- 04-00:24:45
Baum: Yes, I had Dr. Spock. Otherwise—well, let's see, for the first month, I had my mother. She and I would bathe the baby on the kitchen table, and we had fun doing that. There's not too much to learn, you know.
- 04-00:25:13
LaBerge: So how long did the jeweler job last and the New York thing?
- 04-00:25:16
Baum: Well, he had applied, there was a wonderful famous jeweler in New York, and Paul had gone there and applied, and he'd auditioned or---. But we finally decided in the spring to come home and go back to school.

- 04-00:25:44
LaBerge: For him to go back to school and you, too?
- 04-00:25:45
Baum: Yes, and me too, yes. We had sublet our apartment for a year. Just as we were taking off, this famous jeweler called and wanted Paul to come to work for him, and that was a real, Oh, god!
- But he didn't, he didn't, and we came home.
- 04-00:26:16
LaBerge: And I was going to ask you, when you quit school, like what were you--
- 04-00:26:21
Baum: Well, I didn't really quit.
- 04-00:26:22
LaBerge: You didn't really quit, you just said, "I'm going to take a leave?" Did you tell them why, or--?
- 04-00:26:26
Baum: Yes. Well, they probably thought I should take a leave because I had an infant.
- 04-00:26:33
LaBerge: So you just were coming back to school, and what about Paul?
- 04-00:26:37
Baum: And he was starting graduate school, and he had finally made up his mind to go into psychology, and I don't know if he went into psychology or child development. Because he still wanted to work with children. Maybe it was child development. He's like I in American Studies, you're kind of in a wavery thing.
- 04-00:27:12
LaBerge: And this is probably, what, 1953?
- 04-00:27:16
Baum: Yes.
- 04-00:27:20
LaBerge: Okay. You know what, I think we're going to stop there and pick it up—I'll come back and do one more to pick this up until we get to ROHO, does that sound all right?
- 04-00:27:31
Baum: Okay. Well, this is fun, if you--
- 04-00:27:33
LaBerge: Oh, Willa, it's so much fun for me! I think I'm hearing things nobody knows.

[end audiofile 4, end of session]

Interview with Willa Baum
Interviewed by Germaine LaBerge
Interview 3: September 13, 2004
[Begin audiofile 5]

05-00:00:04

LaBerge: Today is September 13, 2004, and this is interview number three with Willa Baum. Well, Willa, when we stopped last time, you and Paul and Marc were moving back from Flushing to--

05-00:00:20

Baum: Oh, back to California.

05-00:00:21

LaBerge: --back to California to go to graduate school. So why don't you tell me a little bit about that? What you were doing and what Paul was doing in graduate school, and where you ended up living.

05-00:00:32

Baum: Well, we had the same apartment, and it's right near here. It was fifty dollars a month. It was a beautiful apartment with a garden and everything, and we were in charge of the—our rent plus, there were a couple of other rentals on the property, and we were supposed to kind of supervise them and take care of the garden. It was a big garden, and that was an interesting thing, because Paul, who came from New York, he knew that there were roses in the world, and he knew that among the birds there were pigeons and sparrows. [laughter]

05-00:01:18

LaBerge: And that was it?

05-00:01:18

Baum: And that was it! [laughter] He didn't know anything about those things. He was good at mechanical things. But he certainly learned about gardening, and he learned about birds. He'd become a—he knew way more than California boys by the time he'd come on a while. Let's see. We learned a lot about mechanics, he did, because we had a washing machine, which sat out on our back porch. We had to have two washing machines, because they were always breaking down. They were always used washing machines, and they were always breaking down. So we had to buy two at a time, and they were very cheap, because of course, they were used washing machines. In the same way, we had more than two cars, because they were always breaking down. Life was a breaking-down world.

05-00:02:28

LaBerge: You weren't the landlords, but you were like the caretaker of the--

05-00:02:32

Baum: Yes, we were on the property. No, we didn't collect the rent or have to rent it.

- 05-00:02:42
LaBerge: So when you came back, who did you study with?
- 05-00:02:46
Baum: Okay, let's see. Well, I just continued on, because I'd taken a leave. Again, I can't remember. It was the same one. I'd been in graduate school, and I continued on, taking all my required courses. I took Russian history.
- 05-00:03:08
LaBerge: Oh, who did you take that from?
- 05-00:03:10
Baum: Oh, dear!
- 05-00:03:11
LaBerge: I mean, is it somebody whose oral history we've done?
- 05-00:03:18
Baum: No. This guy was a rambunctious fellow. A really dramatic teacher, and I think often wrong. [laughter] But oh, I can't remember—it's too bad I can't remember, because later on at ROHO, we did this whole Russian series which we never ended—I mean, it still has a few transcripts to come in.
- 05-00:03:50
LaBerge: Oh, really? Where—you mean the people have them and haven't edited them?
- 05-00:03:56
Baum: No. The fellow who did them was a graduate student when I was a graduate student, Dick Pierce, in Russian history, and he did all the oral histories for years and years. And we didn't pay him, but we did get some money from the Russian department or something, history department, to transcribe and do some things. So we got some really fine interviews. They were sort of—we had to key them into Russians in California, because we were only supposed to, by our mission, to be doing California subjects. These Russians were mostly from—I mean, they ended up in California, but they never were of any significance in California. So we had a little bit at the end about their life in California. Dick Pierce wrote books out of them, and they're very good histories.
- 05-00:05:07
LaBerge: How do you spell Pierce?
- 05-00:05:08
Baum: [spells] Richard Pierce. Well, that was either by the way, because I did know the professors that he worked with. I am sorry that I can't think of all these professors.
- 05-00:05:31
LaBerge: That's okay. Which ones were--

05-00:05:32

Baum:

Though we worked with a lot of them later in oral history, and we got to know them much better, because they'd supervise the whole project.

05-00:05:47

LaBerge:

Well, who were influential for you, that you do remember?

05-00:05:53

Baum:

In the faculty, I think it was—well, see, all these years and years I was in the UC history department, and toward the last five or six years or more, I was with John D. Hicks. He had a modern American history course. I mean, it didn't go back to the Civil War. He was a very good teacher. I was the head of the readers. He didn't have sections, but he had maybe three or four readers, and we worked on tests, grading tests. And he was very—when I knew him, I didn't study with him. I don't think I ever took a seminar with him. He was sort of more a grandfatherly fellow, and he—I did sometimes when I'd be so distressed about what was going on in ROHO for one or another reason, I would go up and talk to Dr. Hicks. He was in the library, in the Main Library, on the fourth floor, and I could always take my broken soul [laughter] up and talk to Dr. Hicks. He was always very sympathetic. I don't know as he could help with the problem, but he certainly was a good man.

05-00:07:39

LaBerge:

Could listen.

05-00:07:38

Baum:

Yes, he was a--. So he and at Whittier, Paul S. Smith, they were my two father figures, sort of. I never cried on Walton Bean's shoulder or any of the other faculty that I dealt with.

05-00:08:03

LaBerge:

Was Dr. Hicks supportive of oral history?

05-00:08:08

Baum:

Yes, but not really. He had written a major, major history book on American history, and he got lots of royalties out of it. I don't think—when I knew him, he was much older, and he was not really working on research, I think. He would work on writing or things like that. But he wasn't digging up new stuff.

05-00:08:59

LaBerge:

Were you still working on water issues, or something else?

05-00:09:04

Baum:

Yes. That's what I was working for, and I think I was working with Davis, Bill Davis, William Davis. But I still had not reached the point where I had to choose a dissertation. I didn't have a dissertation. And as a matter of fact, I thought the history department kind of failed me, or I failed them, in that, well, I took all the courses. I didn't seem to get attached to any faculty member that was really guiding me along, who was interested in me as a PhD I think that might have been, I might have continued on if I'd really had a

strong supporter, but I never—we never boiled down to one person. Always it was—oh, there was a professor of English I liked a lot. I sort of feel like my work life and family life superseded my intellectual life.

05-00:10:31

LaBerge: Well, sure.

05-00:10:30

Baum: Well, not necessarily, but yes, but it wouldn't have—but in my interest in teaching English--

05-00:10:42

LaBerge: So all this time, were you still teaching?

05-00:10:45

Baum: Yes.

05-00:10:45

LaBerge: And doing oral history also?

05-00:10:47

Baum: Not oral history, not oral history yet. Yes, this was in 1950, or 1952, we came back from New York. We had one child. Paul entered graduate school. He decided to take this child development, as I said, so he had a long shift in front of him. I was still plodding along in history, thinking that I would get a PhD in history, teaching English for foreign-born. Maybe that's all I did—oh, no, I was a TA or a reader all those years.

05-00:11:28

LaBerge: For John Hicks, and then also, who took care of Marc?

05-00:11:31

Baum: Oh, yes, that's an important thing. Important thing! My mother had come up from Panama, and she now lived in Berkeley. So she took care of Marc, and every day we'd—we lived on the north side here—we'd drive Marc down to, Mother lived on the south side. We'd plunk him in her apartment, and she just loved that. She was so thrilled to be a mother again, and she took him out—she had a whole crowd of little friends around there that came over, and when he was old enough to go to nursery school, there were co-op nursery schools where the mother had to serve a certain number of days or hours or something a week. Well, Mother did all that. And she loved it! Oh, gosh. She—that must have been the best years of her life, because there she was, really like a young mother with all those mothers, and this little--

05-00:12:43

LaBerge: Which nursery school was this? Or were they all co-ops?

05-00:12:48

Baum:

There were a lot of co-ops, yes. It was on south side. Because later, we went up here to north side for a long time, but again, Mother served as the worker, as the volunteer or the volunteer mother or whatever.

05-00:13:08

LaBerge:

Does Marc remember any of that?

05-00:13:11

Baum:

Yes, he would remember that, yes.

So let's see. In due time, another two years, in 1954, I was pregnant again, and I stayed in school that time. Oh, and that was funny: as time went on, I became more and more pregnant. I was the chief reader for Dr. Hicks. So every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, I would come lumbering in and sit in the front row, [laughter] getting more and more pregnant, and all the people were watching me. Well, at the same time, Dr. Hicks, he had several daughters, and one of his daughters was pregnant. He was very concerned about his family. So in his—anyway, he came in one day and he stood there and he said, "Well, I have something to report. It's a boy." And everybody clapped, and then here comes Willa lumbering in, and it was his daughter that had had the boy! [laughter] To everyone's shock, the pregnant reader was still there. [laughing]

So that summer was when we—and it was in that time, in about the—that we started the oral history--

05-00:14:57

LaBerge:

Okay. Had you already had your second child?

05-00:15:00

Baum:

No.

05-00:14:59

LaBerge:

It was before, okay. So is this when you and Corinne collaborated, or is it when they sent the graduate student to interview--

05-00:15:15

Baum:

No, no, that was before.

05-00:15:16

LaBerge:

Alice Toklas, okay.

05-00:15:17

Baum:

Yes. This was after the Regional Oral History Office [then called the Regional Culture History Project] had been established, as a part of President Sproul's budget, and going through the library. So our leader was—oh, it was a lovely lady. She was assistant librarian, and Mr. Coney, Donald Coney, was the librarian. That lady was a nice lady, and later she died. Helen Worden, I think,

[spells], I think. She was a very nice and reasonable woman, and more or less they left us alone in our--

05-00:16:27

LaBerge: And where were you?

05-00:16:29

Baum: Oh, in the first years, we were right down in the front of the Doe Library. When you come in the main entrance, and the first door was to the left, was a room there, quite a large room. We shared that with the sign maker. Since it was the first office and door when you come in the library, everyone who came in the library stopped in to see where they should go. And also then, What is this, what are you doing here? And so there was a lot of lost time chatting with folks who came by. We also were only, could only work a half day, because the air was so bad in this room, there was no ventilation, that nobody was allowed to work more than half a day.

Now, also the sign painter was painting with smelly paints that might be harmful, so everybody worked short hours. That's when I was still teaching every morning, and I was teaching English.

05-00:17:59

LaBerge: Now, on campus, or still in Oakland?

05-00:18:00

Baum: Oh, in Oakland.

05-00:18:02

LaBerge: So you'd zip down to Oakland, come back--

05-00:18:04

Baum: Yes. I went to Oakland from nine to twelve, and then I had my lunch that I could eat in the car when I came back, and then at one I started work at ROHO.

05-00:18:22

LaBerge: So who else besides you and Corinne?

05-00:18:25

Baum: Well, one of our early employees was Suzanne Oddy, who later quit to get married and then came back as Suzanne Riess.

05-00:18:41

LaBerge: Did you hire her?

05-00:18:46

Baum: You know, I can't remember that. Because in the first year or so, Corinne did all that, and then she dropped back and back and back, and pretty soon I was doing all that; Corinne left. But what the years were, I don't remember.

05-00:19:03
LaBerge: Okay. Well, what was Suzanne doing for you?

05-00:19:05
Baum: Just transcribing, I think. And as we started, when we first started, I was transcribing only, and then—and the exact progression of this I don't know—but we were doing something about [pause] oh, the famous guy who was convicted of throwing the bomb in a parade--

05-00:19:50
LaBerge: Not Harry Bridges.

05-00:19:52
Baum: No.

05-00:19:54
LaBerge: Chessman?

05-00:19:55
Baum: No, no. Thirty years have advanced. [pause] Anyway, he was still imprisoned, and--

05-00:20:14
LaBerge: Mooney?

05-00:20:15
Baum: Mooney! Tom Mooney. Tom Mooney, that's right. We had some Mooney papers in the Bancroft Library, and his cohort who was also, co-worker who was also in prison, his papers were there.

05-00:20:42
LaBerge: So what had they done before? What were the papers on?

05-00:20:47
Baum: The only thing they'd ever done was being convicted of throwing this bomb. Oh, they were labor leaders. They were labor leaders, and they had been convicted in 1919 or so. It was a World War I affair, and it had become a cause célèbre in California, because many people thought they were innocent, which I think they were. So there was a lady named Mary, oh, even if I looked through--

05-00:21:26
LaBerge: We can leave blanks, and they might come up, or somebody might remember. [Mary Gallagher, interviewed 1995.]

05-00:21:31
Baum: Yes. She came up to look at the papers. She was going to help the Bancroft a little. She was a darling lady, quite elderly at this point. She had been the leader of trying to get money and so on to get Tom Mooney out. She also had been in the IWW, Industrial Workers of the World. So since she was up there, I think I interviewed her. Yes. I was just assigned, because she was there, and

Corinne was doing lawyers. She was just, what do you call it, an opportunity target. It wasn't something we were working on, but certainly it was relevant to the Bancroft Library. So I interviewed her, and her husband [Douglas Robson] had written a lot of the IWW songs that are quite famous.

Anyway, when she—at this point, she was out of the Mooney thing, and at some point right in there, Mooney was pardoned.

05-00:23:10

LaBerge: By--? Was it Brown?

05-00:23:19

Baum: No. [pause] I can't remember his name.

05-00:23:31

LaBerge: But it was the governor?

05-00:23:33

Baum: It was the governor.

05-00:23:34

LaBerge: Not Goodwin Knight?

05-00:23:34

Baum: Oh, no, way before that. Yes. Isn't that funny; the names just flit across my memory and they--? [It was Governor Cuthbert Olson.—ed.]

05-00:23:44

LaBerge: Well, we can find that out anyway. So what did this Mary do?

05-00:23:50

Baum: Well, we interviewed her because of her activity in trying to--

05-00:23:53

LaBerge: Oh, you actually interviewed her as a--

05-00:23:56

Baum: As a Tom Mooney participant.

05-00:23:59

LaBerge: Oh, as a participant, gotcha. Okay.

05-00:24:02

Baum: And, she had by now shifted—her focus was working with the blind, and she had become familiar with a man who was the leader of the blind in California. She thought it was a wonderful project, the movement to help the blind, and she was working on that. She kept telling me about these wonderful people I should interview. So it did work out that later she went back to Los Angeles, she was from Los Angeles, but we decided to do a blind project. I did interview two, maybe two people who were leaders of the blind. The blind in

California had been organizing to try—they didn't want to be treated as welfare recipients. They wanted to go to school, and then get jobs.

We had a famous professor on campus, Jacobus ten Broek, and he was also at this point a leader of the blind. My assignment was to interview him, and I tried and tried. I'd keep going to see him, and he was very busy.

05-00:25:34

LaBerge: He was a law professor, right?

05-00:25:36

Baum: No, he was a professor of speech, I think. Oh, and he was just—he was a lawyer. But the speech department sort of had a lot of mavericks in it that didn't fit into any other department--

05-00:25:52

LaBerge: Like Fred Stripp?

05-00:25:53

Baum: That's right, yes. Okay, so there were a number of people like that, and ten Broek was greatly admired. You'll still, anybody who's ever been in his class will tell you how wonderful he was. I never could get him interviewed. Well, I finally did, just I think one or so interviews. It was quite good. And then he never would correct it, because of course, since he couldn't see, for him to do anything like that was more time-consuming than other things, and he really had zillions of things he should do, and a brilliant mind. It really was a shame to ask him to fiddle around with oral history when he had these pressing things, and he did die. So we didn't finish his oral history, which I always thought was a great loss, because while it was not a great interview, and that's because it only was like one hour or so to talk to him, it still showed how great he was.

05-00:27:09

LaBerge: Wow. What other people did you interview for that?

05-00:27:12

Baum: That blind—I did [pause] I did the man who founded the School for the Blind, which was up here, and it's now the Clark Kerr Campus. Gosh, I can see him so clearly, with a little van Dyke beard. [laughs] I can't think of his name. After that I did the Bay Area director of this department that trained blind people.

05-00:27:53

LaBerge: Now, where did the money come from for this particular--?

05-00:27:58

Baum: All our money came from our money from the president.

05-00:28:03

LaBerge: Okay, so you were able to choose, in a way.

05-00:28:06

Baum:

In a way, and everything that we did, it had to be presented to the committee, of which I believe Walton Bean was the head, and so a part of our work was just figuring out what we could do with a certain amount of money, that we were prepared to do, that it would be useful to do, and that we had an interviewer, which was Corinne or myself, that had the background to do it.

Anyway, then it was like applying for a grant, but you'd ask the committee, a number of possible projects, and they would decide what we should do.

05-00:28:51

LaBerge:

And the committee was all faculty?

05-00:28:53

Baum:

Yes. There were about four.

So at some—well, I'm jumping ahead—but at some point, Paul Taylor was on that committee, and Paul Taylor was interested in water. He was a great spokesman for the 160-acre provision, that you get water for 160 acres, and no more. Or you don't get it free from the government. And he wanted, he thought the irrigation systems and things in California were very interesting, and he wanted us to do a man who was a leader in irrigation districts—oh, Charles Lambert, that was his name. Oh, Charles Lambert, yes. Oh. I can't remember which baby I had, because I can remember going to Mr. Lambert's house, dragging that great big Wollensack tape recorder [laughter] when pregnant.

05-00:30:28

LaBerge:

Was he in the Central Valley or someplace like that?

05-00:30:30

Baum:

No, at this point, he lived at Lake Merritt. He lived in a nice mansion on Lake Merritt, and he had made his money in the, not Depression years, pre-Depression. There had been a big farm depression in California in the twenties, and a lot of irrigation districts had opened up. They were established politically, and all the farmers in that irrigation district area were members of the irrigation district. They could get water, the water was built, often with federal funds, and federal water. But then it had a lot of costs, and so they had to pay according to their acreage. Anyway, they were all based on rice to begin with, and the rice failed. I mean, the market just dried up and you couldn't get any money for rice. So the farmers couldn't pay, and so they lost their land.

Now, Mr. Lambert was a land—I don't know what, but he went in, he worked with irrigation districts to try to take over the land as it was lost to the farmers, and sell it, or do something with it, to try and work to keep the irrigation districts from going bankrupt. As a result, since they never could pay him for his work, he got lots of land in lieu of wages, and so he became a very rich man as times changed, and the times had changed when World War II came

along, and the land became useful, or economically viable. Oh, and he had such funny stories to tell. He was just--. And I just became enamored of these irrigation districts and thought, Well, I know what I'll be, I'll be a missionary for irrigation districts, because I thought the political setup of them was splendid in that lots of people who couldn't put in a water system on their own. It was a way that they could band together and get water, and it would work all over the world, that this political system would enable farmers to put in water.

05-00:33:24

LaBerge:

One of the reasons you did it is because you had this background in water, or just because you were the person there?

05-00:33:32

Baum:

Well, both. I was the only person there, besides Corinne, who really was sticking to attorneys.

05-00:33:43

LaBerge:

And did that go on because she started with Neylan and then--

05-00:33:47

Baum:

Yes. Well, I think I told you, her PhD was on the California Bar Association, so she knew all those attorneys. One of the attorneys she did was [pause] a major founder of mining law in California, so his oral history became a sort of foundation piece for our mining series when that started. You can't possibly—these are before you were born.

05-00:34:21

LaBerge:

I know, but I've looked at so many of those oral histories that—we're leaving a blank, because we'll find that one. [William E. Calky, interviewed 1953]

05-00:34:29

Baum:

Okay.

05-00:34:31

LaBerge:

How did you learn to interview?

05-00:34:37

Baum:

Oh.

05-00:34:39

LaBerge:

Because there weren't any guidebooks.

05-00:34:41

Baum:

No, and guidebooks are just written by people, like Corinne and me. We did spend a certain amount of time on our own oral histories. I don't think we read books about interviewing, such as there were. We just studied it ourselves, and we drew up a lot of rules, which always, back in our old office, I could have gone and found that right away and showed you all the things we concluded.

But I've jumped ahead, because one of our first oral histories was, as I said, Sproul wanted us to do Regent Neylan, and Corinne did Regent Neylan, along with Walton Bean. Walton Bean sat in with her, as a professor, and they got along not well. [laughter] Because Walton Bean had strong opinions about the Loyalty Oath, and he would ask very sharp questions of Regent Neylan, and Regent Neylan wasn't used to being asked sharp questions by little professors. [laughter] So there was a lot of sparring back and forth, which was in the oral history. And we did transcribe it, and I transcribed it, and it was when I was trying to finish the transcribing so we could get it to Regent Neylan that I had to leave to have my second son. That was Eric, who was born in 1954.

05-00:36:45

LaBerge: What time of year?

05-00:36:47

Baum: June.

05-00:36:59

LaBerge: So he's just fifty.

05-00:37:00

Baum: Yes, he had his fiftieth birthday this year.

And at the same time, getting back to personal things, Paul was becoming sicker and sicker. I told you that he'd had this breakdown and collapse just before or right after Marc was born.

05-00:37:27

LaBerge: Yes, and you had taken over the election thing.

05-00:37:29

Baum: Yes, and then he got okay. He was in psychology, and so he and his psychologist had determined that it was because he was stressed. Whenever he was stressed with a big test or something, a big thing, he would collapse, and that it was because his mother paid the most attention to him as a boy when he was sick. And when he wasn't sick and he was doing fine, she paid most of her attention to his older brother. So Paul was very critical of himself, because here he was sick, and he had had a big test coming up. Well, the fact was that he was very sick, and he had to go to the Veterans Administration hospital, Fort Miley, in San Francisco. Oh, but it was here at Cowell that they diagnosed it and finally said that he had osteomyelitis. And that means an infection of the bones, and it was a very bad disease from which few people recovered. When he went to Fort Miley, in the hospital, almost all the guys there were a lot of ex-veterans or veterans, who had osteomyelitis, and most of them had been there for years, and their bones, their legs were deteriorating, or their inside bones were. They had no likelihood of living. So that was a pretty hard blow.

05-00:39:30
LaBerge:

Oh, I guess so! And was there a reason why all these veterans—I mean, did it have something to do with military service or something?

05-00:39:37
Baum:

They didn't have a cause, and it was a kind of disease—it was probably like cancer. There must have been hundreds of causes. So they didn't know, and they didn't have a cure.

05-00:39:56
LaBerge:

And so they would just be in bed?

05-00:39:56
Baum:

Yes. But they were trying to do things. They would give them medicines, or they would do things. I can't remember how long Paul was there; several months.

05-00:40:08
LaBerge:

Really? And you had these two little kids.

05-00:40:09
Baum:

Well, I only had one. I was planning to have—the other one was arriving. And Paul got a job with Mary Jones, who was professor of education, in child development. She was teaching a University Extension course in child development that lots and lots of teachers had to take to keep their credential. So there were maybe several hundred teachers taking this at the same time, and it was all male, mostly male. So they'd send out lectures, books, and assignments, and they'd write papers, and they'd send in true and false questions, all kinds of things.

Okay. So Mary Jones gave Paul a job of correcting all of these papers, which was, I'm sure it was just the kindness of her heart.

05-00:41:27
LaBerge:

So he could do that while he's sitting in bed.

05-00:41:29
Baum:

He could do that. And he also could do a wonderful job of grading the people's essays, and he did have a good time, and they became pen pals, all these teachers, that he read their essays and wrote comments on them, and then naturally they related to their personal experiences in teaching or whatever. So it was rewarding intellectually, it was a rewarding job for him, but it also supported him.

I would go get the papers from Mary Jones, there would be a big heap of them. I'd go over every week maybe, or maybe more often, and take them all over. Well, we decided there were so many and such a big bundle that I started grading all the ones that weren't essays. So all the true and falses and this and that, I would sit at home working away on those, and grade all those. Oh, and we also wrote the questions after a while, because they took so many

of these questions, they used Dr. Spock for one, as a textbook. So I would spend my time writing questions and grading them. I had sort of a little course in child development. Yes, so that worked out pretty well.

Well, at some point, Eric was born, and--

05-00:43:11

LaBerge: And Paul was still in the hospital?

05-00:43:12

Baum: And Paul was still in the hospital.

05-00:43:14

LaBerge: So who took you to the hospital and all of that?

05-00:43:18

Baum: Oh, I would drive.

05-00:43:18

LaBerge: You just drove yourself to the hospital?

05-00:43:21

Baum: Sure, I wasn't sick.

05-00:43:22

LaBerge: No, I know you weren't! [laughter] Oh, my gosh. So you'd just drive, park in the lot, and walk in.

05-00:43:37

Baum: Yes. And then I'd rush home and transcribe Regent Neylan.

05-00:43:43

LaBerge: Oh, my—you mean, after you had Eric?

05-00:43:46

Baum: I hadn't had Eric yet. Because as I say, I'd just finished Regent Neylan before Eric was born.

05-00:43:57

LaBerge: Okay, that's what I meant, is who drove you to the hospital when you were having Eric? Did you drive yourself there?

05-00:44:08

Baum: I can't remember that. But I think Paul got out in order to drive me. Oh, but he, they were trying an experimental thing on him, and he had surgery, some kind of a surgery to scrape all the bones of his pelvis and so on, to try and scrape the infection out. It was quite a horrendous surgery, and then they gave him a lot of antibiotics. He began to get better. I believe he probably took me to the hospital, and it was a—because I have a picture of him, it was probably a week after Eric was born, and Eric and Marc are there, and Paul is there. So here the family were all together.

05-00:45:02
LaBerge:

Well, why don't we continue with Paul and this disease. Did this operation cure him?

05-00:45:12
Baum:

Yes. It was a miracle. And I think he was one of the very first. And the reason was that they had discovered new antibiotics. Because this was not so long after World War II, and--

05-00:45:30
LaBerge:

Was it after penicillin was discovered, or not?

05-00:45:33
Baum:

Oh, I don't know—oh, I'm sure it was after penicillin.

05-00:45:38
LaBerge:

Okay. Oh, my gosh. So that was the cure?

05-00:45:43
Baum:

Yes. It was an infection. I guess—and it was an infection that antibiotics could cure. But in the meantime, I had shifted my gears, when I realized that he was going to be sick and sicker, and that I had to get a real job. So I began very intensively taking elementary teaching courses, because I thought, Well, for sure, anywhere in the world that I have to go, I can get a job as an elementary teacher. I was still working for Dr. Hicks. [laughter]

05-00:46:30
LaBerge:

And you're still transcribing.

05-00:46:33
Baum:

Yes, I'm still working in the Regional Cultural History Office, and all the time I could spend on that. Probably still putting along taking a history course or two, because I still was keeping my PhD options open.

However, at that time, there were no jobs for PhDs I don't know why, 1954. As I say, there were only—there was one other girl, maybe two, in the history department. One got offered a job which I think she took in Mississippi for \$4,000 a year. I thought, I can't go to Mississippi. I have to stay near a Veterans Administration hospital. That's why I thought—so my chances of getting a college teaching position where there was a V.A. hospital, and that somehow I could support my kids, because my mother wouldn't be there--. And that's why I switched to elementary as a fall-back.

Well, I never finished my elementary, because for one thing, Paul got better. So I didn't really want to teach elementary school. And for two, I never could take the time off to do the--

05-00:48:13
LaBerge:

The student teaching?

- 05-00:48:14
Baum: Yes. The student teaching was too big a block of time. Anyway, and Paul did get better, and went on with his PhD search.
- 05-00:48:32
LaBerge: And what about Mary Jones? Is this Mary Jones of the little school, the Harold--
- 05-00:48:38
Baum: Yes. And Paul did a lot of work with Harold Jones too. Harold Jones was in the psychology department, and Mary Jones was in the education department, although she was actually a psychologist. But they could not be in the same department at that time.
- 05-00:48:58
LaBerge: That's right. Do you want to say for the tape why? I mean, I know why, but--
- 05-00:49:01
Baum: Oh, yes, let's see. The—now I've forgotten the word.
- 05-00:49:06
LaBerge: Nepotism.
- 05-00:49:07
Baum: Nepotism, yes. They couldn't—they had a rule that husbands and wives or relatives could not be in the same department, which was a really hard rule, because by the nature of life, people met somebody else in their same department, and both PhD students, and there they would be, ready to go to teach in the same place. Yes, a lot of things have changed. Oh, Harold and Mary Jones were a great, great blessing to us. You talk about people who've helped you through life in some way or another. Yes, well, that job, Paul had that job for a number of years, he kept doing that for Mary Jones.
- And from then on, things get sort of fuzzy in my mind about--
- 05-00:50:10
LaBerge: Well, let's talk about child care. Now that you have two kids, did your mother take care of--
- 05-00:50:16
Baum: Yes.
- 05-00:50:19
LaBerge: She took care of both of them?
- 05-00:50:19
Baum: Yes, I have pictures of her. She's a small, thin lady, and she's got pictures with these two strapping babies on her shoulders, two of them! Oh, she just—she had the most fun with those kids.

05-00:50:38
LaBerge:

That is great. And of course, she hadn't had boys, so it's a new experience.

05-00:50:42
Baum:

Yes. How old, I try to think how old she was. She was maybe in her late forties.

05-00:50:52
LaBerge:

Because she was a young mother anyway, so—yes. And did you stay in this apartment--

05-00:50:59
Baum:

We stayed in that apartment until we bought this house, and we used to see this house—this house is on the way from 1165 Arch, and if we walked to downtown, we would go by this house on Spruce Street. It was empty for more than a year, and the weeds were growing up around it. I didn't think about it except to notice how the nice garden had gone to rack and ruin. Well, the man who owned it had died, and it was eventually in an estate sale. So we saw a "for sale" sign, and it was a ridiculous idea for us to buy a house, you know, because we were just living on these little pieces of jobs.

But we went through it. We didn't go through it with an agent at all. We saw somebody going in with an agent to see this haunted house, and we went in with them, and we saw it once. We just looked around a little bit; we didn't know anything about it. It was all dingy and dusty. We thought we liked it.

Well, it happened that Mother was in this co-op nursery school, she had made friends with a lady, oh, gosh, here I come to the name again. Who was a real estate agent. Arlene Slaughter. She's very famous.

05-00:52:50
LaBerge:

That name sounds familiar.

05-00:52:51
Baum:

And Arlene Slaughter was married to one of the Black Panthers, I think. I may have that a little bit wrong, but she was related to the Black Panther movement through her husband. Arlene Slaughter's goal in life was to get black people into white neighborhoods. So she was known for that. She would get a black family and try to buy a house for them in a white neighborhood. She was hated in Berkeley; there was not much—this was a segregated city, pretty well. And Mother was a great believer of desegregating, and she, as I said, back in the civil rights time, she'd sat in on restaurants or things like that. So she liked Arlene Slaughter a lot, and she said, well, why didn't we get Arlene Slaughter to help us. So we did, and Arlene Slaughter told us how to bid. It was sealed bids.

It just happened that an aunt of mine had died and left me about \$6,000.
[laughter]

05-00:54:31
LaBerge: Which at that time was a lot.

05-00:54:31
Baum: It was more money. And it just happened that Paul, who had had an accident a long time ago with a pressure cooker that blew up in his face, had been pursuing a lawsuit against the pressure cooker company, and had just won the lawsuit and had a couple of thousand dollars. So we took our two little lumps of money, which totaled \$10,000, and we bid the whole thing, every cent, on this house. This house was condemned. You had to build a new retaining wall, or you couldn't live in it. A retaining wall had a bill of at least \$12,000 or more to build it. So how we were going to do that, we didn't know, but we just put our \$10,000. Arlene Slaughter told us to put every cent we had down, and we did.

And lo and behold, we got it!

05-00:55:44
LaBerge: Oh, my gosh. So you bought this house—like 195-when?

05-00:55:48
Baum: It was just after 1956, about 1957.

05-00:55:56
LaBerge: For \$10,000!

05-00:55:57
Baum: Yes.

05-00:55:56
LaBerge: Oh, my gosh, Willa. [laughter]

05-00:56:01
Baum: I know!

05-00:56:00
LaBerge: At the time you'd have no idea about that.

05-00:56:04
Baum: Oh, no, and by that time, we had another child.

05-00:56:08
LaBerge: Okay, who was the third?

05-00:56:09
Baum: Rachel. And she was born in 1956. Our apartment that we were living in, which was fine, but we already—we slept in the living room, and the two baby boys slept in the bedroom, and we were going to have to put the third child in. And also, my mother was becoming ill. I mean, she was not strong enough to really take care of three children. So I was going to have to hire a housekeeper or somebody who'd stay with three children. Life was always--

05-00:56:47

LaBerge: A juggle, eh?

05-00:56:49

Baum: A juggle, a juggle, because we had nobody we could fall back on. But we got this house, and we fixed it up. It took a long time to do a lot of things like--

05-00:57:02

LaBerge: Did you do all of it yourselves, or--

05-00:57:03

Baum: Mostly, yes, and we even got a brilliant engineer who figured out an easier way to do the retaining wall, and Paul rented a bulldozer and did it himself, with a couple of guys. So it was like the Lord was watching over us step by step.

05-00:57:28

LaBerge: My gosh, yes. Now, tell me about, since you brought her up, Arlene Slaughter. What else did she do that made her famous?

05-00:57:46

Baum: She got murdered by somebody. Yes, and it probably had to do with Black Panthers.

05-00:57:54

LaBerge: And was she black herself, or was she white?

05-00:57:59

Baum: No, no, she wasn't [black]. Oh, dear, I hope I'm telling it right, because it all mashes together in my mind. I know I thought it was terrible that after all Arlene had done, and I don't think anyone ever knew why she got murdered. But she had been very—that was the Black Panther days, and she had been very active in lots of things that were going on. Oh, and our neighbor—well, this is another story—but when we moved in, and--

05-00:58:43

LaBerge: And you moved in with the three kids?

05-00:58:45

Baum: With the three kids. Our neighbor, oh, she was an old lady who lived next door, she was very angry. We found out she was not going to—she was sure that we were a black family, because she had heard that Arlene Slaughter was the real estate agent, and her friends had told her, well, that meant we were a black family. [laughter] She probably wished we were some other family, because we certainly weren't a very quiet family. [laughter]

05-00:59:25

LaBerge: Well, did your mother come and live with you here?

05-00:59:28

Baum:

Oh, no, she always lived in an apartment in south Berkeley, the same. And my sister lived with her for a while. Sometimes Mother had other tenants lived with her, helped pay the rent.

05-00:59:47

LaBerge:

Well, let's go back to the loyalty oath. What do you remember about that being on campus?

05-00:59:54

Baum:

Not very much. I do know it was a hotly contested thing. It was not like the Free Speech Movement, where young people, the students were more involved. This was a mighty argument going on, but it was with the faculty who were leading the charge. And it was a hard question to know, and there were outstanding faculty on both sides. Although nobody liked the loyalty oath, but they thought, since the state was forcing it on them, it was better to just do it than to fight. There were others who, as you know, refused to sign, and there were a number of younger faculty who refused to sign and were laid off and never resurfaced, I guess. I mean, it just destroyed their careers. That's what the older faculty said: they could afford to resist, because they could go to another job. They'd already made their reputation.

05-01:01:19

LaBerge:

But you as students didn't get involved in either rallies or anything?

05-01:01:25

Baum:

No, I didn't, and I was never much of an activist. I don't know if I would have been an activist by personality or not. But by lifestyle, I certainly had no time to rally.

05-01:01:40

LaBerge:

That is for sure! [laughter] You had a rally right here!

05-01:01:49

Baum:

Yes, I know. I'd have to bring my three kids with me. [laughter] Oh, gosh.

05-01:02:04

LaBerge:

Oh, we have enough time to do this, okay. How about if we go, just finish up the kids? So we have this all on this one piece. When the next ones were born.

05-01:02:18

Baum:

Okay. Well, in 1956, Rachel was born.

05-01:02:21

LaBerge:

First daughter.

05-01:02:20

Baum:

Yes, and then we moved into this house.

05-01:02:24

LaBerge:

And did you hire a housekeeper?

05-01:02:26

Baum: Yes. Who came in every day.

05-01:02:32

LaBerge: But even that's not easy, to find the right person and--

05-01:02:35

Baum: Oh, no, and we did, we had the loveliest black lady, oh. Oh, my kids have been so lucky with the people that raised them. [laughs]

And then in 1960, Brandon was born. So that made four. And in that time, I guess we were just going on and on the same way. I taught in the mornings at the English for foreign-born. I worked at ROHO in the afternoon. I probably taught at night. And Paul got sundry jobs. As you become more advanced as a grad student, you get jobs with your professors, or-- He got various jobs, I can't remember what all they were. He eventually had to, like an internship. He started his dissertation, and he picked a dissertation that was hard and expensive to do.

05-01:03:56

LaBerge: What was it?

05-01:03:56

Baum: Because he was going to try and establish whether kids who were schizophrenic or cracked in some ways, I don't know what—I think schizophrenic—if the reason they were that way was because their parents were giving them mixed messages. So that they didn't know what was right and what was wrong. And in order to do that, he had all of these families, schizophrenic and non-schizophrenic, and he'd have the parents, or the one or another, talking to the child, and tape record it. They'd just talk about normal little things. But then he'd have, the tape recording would be scrambled in such a way that you couldn't tell what it was saying, but you could get all the emotional context. The idea was, were these kids hearing, "You're a dear child" in words, and in sound, they were hearing that they're a bad kid. And that was really, that was a period of time, I think that was a reasonable project in those years, because it was a time when they really thought that all of mental illness was the parents' fault.

Well, then Paul had to hire lots of people who were psychologically sophisticated, and I don't remember who he hired, but he had to pay them, to listen to these garbled tapes and evaluate them on what the message was. Well, you can imagine that took a lot of time. It took a lot of getting people to do the interviews. I think he had to pay the parents too, I don't know. Anything else he could have done, something easier. But—[laughter]

05-01:06:22

LaBerge: But he was interested in--

05-01:06:23

Baum:

Yes. He really did firmly believe that the parents were the trouble, and if you could straighten out the parents, get their messages straight, you wouldn't have all these kids with troubles. It took him a very long time.

In the meantime, he had managed to get credentialed as a therapist. He hadn't finished his PhD yet, but he did get a credential as a therapist, probably two years before he finished his dissertation. So he could work as a therapist, and he was taking patients.

Well, then finally, he had—they finally told him if he didn't finish his dissertation, he was the longest running candidate they'd had. Let's see, when had he started? Well, we came back from New York in 1952, so he'd started in '52, and they gave him the deadline in 1966. [laughter] And he had to, he absolutely had to get his dissertation done. They'd given him so many extensions, and if he didn't, he was out. And Paul was always one who would gamble to the last minute. You can tell that he was a gambler; he was more of a gambler than I am. But I would go on the--. And so he got his dissertation in like one hour before the deadline. And then his dissertation passed, and they told him he had gotten his PhD.

I have a picture of us standing here, saluting the completion, and there we are with five children.

05-01:08:31

LaBerge:

Oh, my gosh, okay, we've somehow--

05-01:08:31

Baum:

Because Brandon had been born in 1960, oh and Noah in 1966.

05-01:08:43

LaBerge:

And did you go to the graduation with the hoard?

05-01:08:46

Baum:

We went to graduation, and Paul's parents came out, and so there we were with his parents and my mother, and we didn't bring the baby, but we had four children there. [laughter] And it was in 1966, after Noah was born. Oh, and before that, I had just been, I had applied and been offered the job as a junior college teacher at Merritt College. That was a really good job, because the junior college teachers make good money. I mean, everything was good, and also, it wasn't as difficult as being a professor or something, because I did by that time have a lot of children. So I told them, "Well, I'd like to accept this job, but I'm pregnant now, and I hope you won't be embarrassed if the new teacher is waddling around," and they thought it over, and finally they told me no.

05-01:10:00

LaBerge:

Really?

05-01:10:00
Baum: So I didn't get that job.

05-01:10:04
LaBerge: Now, in this day and age, you couldn't do that.

05-01:10:05
Baum: It wouldn't have happened. Well, maybe, but things were different. So it was then that I decided that maybe I had to quit that teaching, because—well, let's see. We had in the meantime built an apartment in the basement where we could have a live-in housekeeper. But I think we didn't have one then. I don't remember, but it just became so difficult to be sure I could get a substitute with all the things that happened to the kids, that I needed to have somebody who would--

05-01:10:48
LaBerge: Who was really here.

05-01:10:49
Baum: --was really here, and so I decided, well, I can work more time at ROHO, which had changed to ROHO by that time. And that's flexible hours. If I have to race home to do something, I can do it. And so 1966, I quit teaching.

05-01:11:11
LaBerge: And when was Anya born?

05-01:11:15
Baum: 1972.

05-01:11:17
LaBerge: Oh, okay, so this—so you were pregnant with Noah in 1966 when you didn't—okay.

05-01:11:23
Baum: Yes.

05-01:11:27
LaBerge: Okay, so 1972, Anya. By that time, you had big kids too. Well, some who were even out of the house probably, by then.

05-01:11:39
Baum: Yes, I think Marc was--

05-01:11:41
LaBerge: He would have been twenty?

05-01:11:43
Baum: Yes.

05-01:11:49
LaBerge: What year did the office change from the Regional Cultural History Office to Oral History Office?

- 05-01:12:02
Baum: Gee, I wrote that up in a report, I'd have to look that up.
- 05-01:12:07
LaBerge: Okay. How did that happen?
- 05-01:12:09
Baum: They had all over campus or all over the university, not just UC Berkeley, they decided there were too many little projects or things, and that they wanted, they set up a listing of what was an institute and what was an office and what was a—I don't know, they had several categories. They didn't know what to put us in, and they had a big evaluation, a faculty evaluation. Primarily, who's the professor? Oh dear, I can't remember--. It was a professor of architecture, and he was put in charge of our committee, and he did a lot of work and I got a lot of material for him. He spent a lot of time in the office, in fact, checking how we did things. Goodman. I'd have to find that, because he certainly did put the work in on it. Anyway, that's when they put us into the Bancroft Library.
- 05-01:13:41
LaBerge: You mean to be a part of the Bancroft Library.
- 05-01:13:43
Baum: A part of the Bancroft Library, because before we'd been this sort of floating thing in the library. So we came under the Bancroft Library. That was good, I think. The director of the Bancroft Library would be our supervisor, rather than this faculty committee, although we always tried to have faculty advisors for the various projects that would be in their field. A faculty advisor in the field of the project.
- 05-01:14:24
LaBerge: Was Dr. Hart there by this time?
- 05-01:14:28
Baum: I don't remember.
- 05-01:14:37
LaBerge: So at the same time, did you move to the Annex?
- 05-01:14:43
Baum: Oh, we had moved quite a bit before that.
- 05-01:14:46
LaBerge: Maybe when you—the next set of interviews when you're talking about that, you can go into those moves and--
- 05-01:14:54
Baum: Oh, that's what I can't remember!
- 05-01:14:55
LaBerge: Or just even where they were.

05-01:14:59

Baum: Yes, yes. It was lovely to get out of that place that there was no air.

05-01:15:04

LaBerge: Oh, I bet!

[end audiofile 5, end of session]

Interview with Willa Baum
 Interviewed by Malca Chall
 Interview 4: February 16, 2005
 [Begin audiofile 6 (tape 1, side A)]

Chall: I want us to start at the beginning.

Baum: Beginning of what?

Chall: Beginning of ROHO. I just wanted to know where you and Corinne Gilb started together, and how your partnership became part of the oral history—well, whatever you want to call it—the oral history system at Berkeley. As far as I know it was proposed in 1953 by James Hart, who was chairman of the Academic Senate Library Committee, and it was a pilot project under TBL [the Bancroft Library]. So what happened to it after 1953? When did you start?

Baum: Possibly—well, let me see. I was working—I can only put it on when my children were born. [laughs] It was probably early 1954, maybe it was late '53, and—yes, it was a real pilot project. Before the pilot project, Jim Hart had asked one of his students, Ron [Roland] Duncan, who was going to Paris for some reason, to interview Alice B. Toklas. It was kind of, Dr. Hart's idea was that this was an experiment, because in fact the Bancroft Library had some Gertrude Stein papers. She had lived in Oakland. Gertrude Stein was dead, but Ron could go and interview Alice B. Toklas, who was still in Paris.

So he did, and I didn't know anything—I had nothing to do with all of that. But apparently, he brought home tapes, and they were transcribed. They're still in the Bancroft. They're good transcripts. And so it looked good. I think that's what Dr. Hart used to talk about: why shouldn't we pick up a system to continue Hubert Howe Bancroft's work?

Chall: I see.

Baum: And what happened after that I don't know. I don't know why they selected Corinne. Corinne was working on her PhD, and I was working on my PhD, and we were both teaching assistants for Lawrence Harper.

Chall: In history.

Baum: In history, yes, and we taught the—oh, the basic course, I think maybe it was History 17 or—[laughter]. There were a number of us, so maybe four TA's [teaching assistants] in there. I did talk about this to Germaine, because it sounds familiar to me.

- Chall: Yes, that's right, you did. I know there's going to be overlap, because several of us are going to be working on this oral history. So as teaching assistants, how did you get to the history project? Was it then called the--
- Baum: It wasn't called anything. And how they asked Corinne to do it, I don't know. Corinne was working, her PhD was on the California Bar Association, the history of the California Bar Association, which had her researching and probably interviewing, I don't know, a number of old bar-sters from California who were significant in California history. Everything in California history was significant to the University of California. So somehow, I can't remember who was the first interviewee. It might have been one of the [bar] people, because Corinne had an in with all these real old attorneys. She asked me to help her transcribe, that's all. I wasn't selected by anybody except Corinne, and Corinne was probably selected because she knew a couple of faculty members. It was not a carefully done affair, and we weren't even anything. We weren't an office or anything yet. [laughs] And my first assignment, I think, was transcribing—let me see, I have such a poor memory—Neylan, Regent John Francis Neylan.
- Chall: She had interviewed him?
- Baum: She had interviewed him, and I was typing away on that. I can't quite even remember where we were, if we were—we had a room somewhere, or where we were established, if we were established. But all I know is that John Francis Neylan was in a hurry to get his transcript. He was always in a hurry for everything, and I was about to have a baby, and--
- Chall: Your first baby?
- Baum: Second. And I was typing away, and my husband Paul was standing around saying, "Don't you think we ought to go down to the hospital?" and I was saying, "John Francis Neylan needs this!" [laughter]
- Chall: You mean you were actually doing it in your house?
- Baum: No, not in my house, I was at the university. All I know is that I got it done, and Eric was born. I mean, he was born in the hospital. It all worked out just fine. I don't know who had to decide if it was going to be a viable project or not, I only know that they made it a project and they gave us a room in the library.
- Chall: And that really was sort of an adjunct of her project, of her working on her PhD and on attorneys? No?
- Baum: Not really, no.

- Chall: Was this a time when they had decided to do university history? Or was John Francis Neylan a regent at the time?
- Baum: I'm sure that Robert Gordon Sproul chose John Francis Neylan. I didn't talk to Sproul about this, but I understood that Sproul wanted a history of the loyalty oath.
- Chall: Oh, I see, yes.
- Baum: And John Francis Neylan, of course, was his chief nemesis in that. So he wanted to be sure we got John Francis Neylan, and the idea, which was not really formally agreed on or planned even, was that eventually we'd get Robert Gordon Sproul, and he could lay the whole thing out. And that never happened. So you see, we started with the beginning parts, and we never got to the great finale, which was too bad.
- Chall: Now, at the time. I think they were planning ahead for the centennial of the University of California, so that they were looking ahead to maybe doing oral histories, so that they could have something for the centennial. I think that worked into it, because Walt [Walton] Bean was presumably in charge of getting that started.
- Baum: Right, Walton Bean was very eager to have interviews with all the leading characters. Walt Bean had his own project, which was the centennial history of--
- Chall: I see, that was his own.
- Baum: And he had some research assistants, grad students, working with him. They were doing some interviews too. So ours was not part of his project, but we did interview some people that would work in with his project. Our interviews were much fuller. His, the people he would send in to interview somebody, it would be on some point, because Bean was writing this stuff, or gathering his materials, and he'd come to a point where he didn't know what happened, and so he'd send in his interviewer and maybe do an hour's interview on that particular thing. They did do a number of interviews, and they are all filed in the Bancroft Library under the name of whatever was the project, probably Centennial History Project, as Bean's. It wasn't ours.
- Chall: I see. But eventually, it became linked in some way.
- Baum: Well, it was linked through Bean, Walton Bean, because—and again, I can't remember how we—at some point we very soon had an advisory committee, which never met, or I didn't meet with them.
- Chall: You weren't aware of it when it met.

Baum: And Walton Bean was assigned to be in charge of us.

Chall: Yes. That's the next period I have. I've been using notes from ROHO boxes, some that are filed in the [ROHO] office and in the Bancroft Library, so I have only what was in the notes. I have 1955—that's about when things really moved along, that there was an appointment of a Regional Cultural History Subcommittee of the Senate Library Regional Cultural History Project Committee. So there was a Regional Cultural History Project Committee, and it had a subcommittee, and the subcommittee was made up of Walton Bean, the chairman; Paul Taylor; George Foster; and it was to exercise academic supervision of the project. They met several times a year, and Corinne Gilb was then I guess the head of what they must have named the Regional Cultural History Project. She was there at these committee meetings.

Also present was Donald Coney, who was the head university librarian, and so you were sort of technically under his umbrella.

Baum: Yes.

Chall: Between the meetings of this committee, Professor Bean was active, and because he was in charge of the Centennial History Project, the two projects worked together in the field of university history. That's the beginning. And as far as I can tell, Corinne Gilb was part of that staff, 1954 on. I have her last date as 1959, but she resigned in '57. I don't know what the '59 means, except that she might have had work to finish.

So you really, at that time, you were actually on the staff in 1955 of the Regional Cultural History Project, but you had nothing to do with these meetings.

Baum: No. When we say on the staff, you must realize our staff probably was four hours a week. [laughs] Because Corinne was not working full time, or half time even, or anything, and neither was I. We were both tending our other affairs mostly.

Chall: Right. She was working on getting her PhD, and you were--

Baum: And she was a TA, as I say, and she had two children.

Chall: And you had two children. Were you continuing to work on your PhD at the time?

Baum: Yes. And the reason—let's see. We argued about what its name should be, because we knew we'd have to invite people to participate in the name of something, and we named us Regional Cultural History because we didn't want to use the word oral history, because we were not planning necessarily to interview the people we wrote to. We just wanted to find out what they knew

about whatever we were researching, and get their papers or their notes or something, and then if they seemed like a good candidate for an interview, then we would invite them to do an oral history.

- Chall: You were under the direction of this subcommittee. While Bean was there, he could give you the go-ahead. I don't know where your money came from. But after that, you couldn't do anything unless Mr. Coney approved. So when you say you didn't want to say that you were an oral history project, is it because you weren't really sure that that's what you were heading toward, or that this is what you were really supposed to be doing?
- Baum: We knew that we were going to do tape recordings. We were not really paper-collectors, that was the Bancroft Library's bailiwick. But we did not want all the people we wrote to to assume that they were then going to be interviewed, because we knew that the amount of effort that would go into all these interviews we could not possibly do.
- Chall: There were still the two of you. And you were doing the transcribing, as well as the interviewing?
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: So that was a decision that the two of you made basically? Just the two of you made this decision, or did you make it, you think, with Professor Bean?
- Baum: We didn't sit with Dr. Bean much, and we didn't sit with the committee at all. I think we did what we have always done: we would prepare a list of reasonable people to interview that fitted in with our research and that we had some reason to believe they'd be good. Then we would present them to the committee, knowing that we couldn't do all the people we presented, and if anything, they would select the three or four that we could do. So the committee never spent more than fifteen minutes worrying about us.
- Chall: So it was really the two of you, in a sense, moving ahead?
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: Were you primarily working on the history of the University of California? Were most of these, your interviewees, in the earliest days, do you think?
- Baum: Well, some of them were leading lawyers. I can remember one we did, but this interview has been used again and again. And he was just a—I don't think he had anything to do with the university. Well, I mean, he was—gosh, if I could remember his name. He was very prominent in the history of California, and he was prominent in—I'm sure Corinne knew him through her California State Bar research. He turned out to be sort of a leading Sierra Club man, and

that's why his interview has been so extensively used, and he probably died within a year or so, so—[William E. Colby]

- Chall: Well, you can probably find that one [in the catalogue.]¹
- Baum: So we were so lucky. I mean, everyone we got was good.
- Baum: And why we started with John Francis Neylan is I'm sure from President Sproul.
- Chall: Now, as you were moving along, the two of you, and making decisions on whom you might interview, were you always doing the transcribing and interviewing as well?
- Baum: No. At first, no, I'm sure there were other transcribers. And as I say, every transcriber probably worked three hours a week. We were—to call us an office even was a laugh. Yes, gosh. I just need a whole long list of names, and then I could tell you—but I started interviewing with a lady, Mrs. Gallagher. She was, what was the bombing, two men were convicted of throwing a bomb in 1915, and they were in prison, and that second guy.
- Chall: I think, Willa, we can find these probably in your earliest catalogue, those names, so we might just skip that for now.
- Baum: All I know is that there was a young man who—if I could even come to the name, it would all come into focus.
- Chall: Okay, let me turn this off. [tape interruption] Okay, let's see. [checking catalogue] It was the Tom Mooney--
- Baum: Well, the Bancroft Library had the Tom Mooney and Warren Billings, I think, papers. There was a fellow--
- Chall: And who was the other person you mentioned? Tom Mooney and who else?
- Baum: I think it was Warren Billings [spells]. And Mary Gallagher had been the head of the Billings defense committee. She was an IWW [Industrial Workers of the World] lady, a charming lady, just a little round jolly lady. [laughs]
- Chall: So you interviewed Mary Gallagher?
- Baum: Yes, and the reason I interviewed her was because she had come up to the Bancroft Library for a couple of days, and it was because of a man who was

¹ Catalogue I of the Regional Oral History Office listed all interviews completed by ROHO between 1954 and 1979. It will be referred to by Willa or Chall as the catalogue.

writing a history of Tom Mooney. He came up every summer, he was teaching somewhere, and worked in these papers. He had arranged—in fact, he'd arranged I think for the papers to come to the Bancroft Library. She was there, and we needed to interview her right away. So they plucked me for it, and I worked with Mary Gallagher, not very long. I mean, we had a couple—we had a jolly time, gee.

- Chall: You say “they plucked me right away,” they--
- Baum: “They” were probably Corinne, or I don’t know who it was.
- Chall: Corinne probably, and that committee, or Walton Bean--
- Baum: I’m sure the committee didn’t--
- Chall: She talked to Walton Bean, I’m sure.
- Baum: She talked to Walton Bean, sure, sure. And they decided that they had to catch that lady, Mary Gallagher, and I got to do it, and that was a very great pleasure, and I always adored Mary Gallagher. [laughter] But Mary Gallagher had moved on in her interests. She was now working with the California Council for the Blind.
- Chall: Ah, so that’s where we [ROHO] got into that.
- Baum: And she just, she was devoted to this man named Newell Perry. And Newell Perry, he had been very active in, I think, the founding of the school for the blind. He was in Berkeley, and she just went on and on about how wonderful Newell Perry was. So finally, I don’t know why, but we decided to interview Newell Perry. That’s how it grew, from step to step.
- Chall: Yes, I see. I always remembered the name Newell Perry, and there were other people who were aligned with that program for the blind, that I think were in our “in limbo” drawer for a long time.
- Baum: That’s right, it was ten Broek, Professor [Jacobus] ten Broek. Let’s see, we did Newell Perry in 1956. And we did a couple of other people, following the blind. Jenkins, who was head of the training program in California. Allen Jenkins, director of the Oakland Orientation Center for the Blind.
- Chall: That one was completed. Did you do the others; did you do Newell Perry and Professor ten Broek and Allen Jenkins?
- Baum: I did, yes, but ten Broek we never finished.
- Chall: That’s right. I remember he’s in the [in limbo] drawer, he was in the drawer.

Baum: Yes, and it was a pretty good interview. I was very annoyed. But he would not finish anything. He was very—unless he could review it. And since he was blind, reviewing something took a very substantial piece of his time, and whomever helped him, his assistants.

Chall: One moment, please, now I'm going to check the tape. [tape interruption] Yes, ten Broek. So that's why you never were able to do anything with it, and there were other interviews like that you [ROHO] could never finish. And they were never put out anywhere, which was a shame.²

Baum: Yes, because they were--They definitely were just in limbo.

Chall: That's what we called it. So, that was in 1956. According to my notes, you were supported by general assistance from funds from the Bancroft Library and library budgets [1953-1955], so you didn't really have your own funds.

Baum: But the good thing about us, what I thought was a blessing and didn't realize until it was taken away, was that we had a wired—that's not the right word—our budget, the money came from the president's office through the library, but it was not part of the library's budget. And therefore, nobody could snatch it. And when we became part of the Bancroft Library, they snatched it.

Chall: Well, for a while, you got budgeting from—let's see, it was Letters and Science, later on. But you were getting money from the president's budget. I don't know how long that lasted.³

Baum: It was probably the same thing. Just Letters and Science had, I don't know--

Chall: That was later, 1960 I think. You have been going through some of the interviews that you did up to '56. Then, in 1956 Dr. Bean went to Pakistan for two years, and he left no one in charge of overseeing the Regional Cultural History Project. There was a new faculty committee appointed made up of Sanford Mosk, and George Stewart, and Paul Taylor, and T. J. Kent, and Mr. [Marion] Milczewski [who was assistant librarian [1953-1960] under Donald Coney]. Here we are.

[Begin tape 1, side B]

Baum: [I don't think they knew]--about what we were interviewing or anything.⁴

² Some interviews which had not been completed and which we hoped could be finished were carefully catalogued and put into a drawer in the office labeled "in limbo. Periodically Willa and I would review it to see if any of the interviews could be completed. Some were.

³ From 1956-1957 RCHP funds came from a special appropriation from the President's contingent fund.

- Chall: You must have just gone ahead, and done it anyway. In minutes of the meeting of 12/6/56, the library claims it cannot provide further financial support on your budget request. Dr. Bean leaves, you have a committee, a subcommittee, and there's no budget. Can you recall anything about that time? You were interviewing. So the money may still have come from the president's--
- Baum: I still think it was wired from the president's office. Maybe we were trying to apply for library funds. I'm not sure of that, and I don't remember any great battles about--
- Chall: Well, you probably didn't have to battle at that time. But in 1957, when Corinne Gilb resigned as the head of the project, and she went to the Institute of Industrial Relations—somewhere I had in notes which I can't locate now—as director. You don't think she ever went there as director?
- Baum: No, no.
- Chall: She just went there.
- Baum: But they started an oral history program, and she was not only the director, she was it. She interviewed a number of people, and I think we've put that in the catalogue, too. She did quite a few interviews that we catalogued. [looking through catalogue]
- Chall: Was Clark Kerr then the director of that institute?
- Baum: I don't know. I didn't know anything about Clark Kerr.
- Chall: I see. I don't know why I thought he was, but perhaps not.
- Baum: Well, he might—oh, I can remember some of the directors too, but let's see. ["chit chat" not typed]
- Chall: So, yes, here I have it in my notes. In '56-'57, there was a special appropriation from the president's contingent fund, and you continued your work underway, but a lack of faculty participation made the project's future uncertain. So when Corinne left and you were there, you stayed on, did you have this feeling of uncertainty? I mean, did you ever know that you were not sure where this project, this office was going to go?
- Baum: Well, you must remember that we were hardly an office.

⁴ Willa began to talk while the tape was turned off. So we we lost the content of her sentence. My guess is that she said something to the effect that these men never knew "about what we were interviewing or anything." M.C.

- Chall: That's true. You still weren't working—probably worked maybe more than--
- Baum: We were still a little group of hourly transcribers, and--
- Chall: And you, sort of catch-as-catch-can interviewees.
- Baum: Yes. No, and not catch-as-catch—they were organized, and after I moved into this blind [project], there were probably only three persons that we did then. I moved [on] into a man named Charles Lambert, who was an irrigation district manager or something.
- Chall: Yes. Now that, I realize, got you into water and irrigation. How did it come about that you got Charles Lambert?
- Baum: Yes. I'm sure that came from Paul Taylor, and Paul Taylor was--
- Chall: Ah, I see. He was on this committee.
- Baum: He was on the committee, and he was always interested in people we interviewed in the water field.
- Chall: So that was it. And it's interesting, because he was on the committee which was supposed to help choose interviewees, and you have him there with this great—well, his reputation. So everyone [on this committee] could move you into something [in his field]. Walton Bean could--
- Baum: Yes, or possibly somebody else.
- Chall: Even T. J. Kent, ultimately I don't know that he did it early. George Stewart might have in time.
- Baum: No, he didn't.
- Chall: But certainly Walton Bean. But now Walton Bean is gone, so actually, that almost helped you when you were through with the project with the blind, that—[someone like Paul Taylor was on the committee.]
- Baum: I'm sure by then, Dr. Taylor was pounding on us to do this amazing man, Charles Lambert. [laughs]
- Chall: Right. What does Charles Lambert show on your—was that done in 19--
- Baum: '56. [looking at catalogue] Wait. Lambert—no, wait a minute. 1956. Interviewed 1956.
- Chall: Very good. It all dovetails, doesn't it?

- Baum: Yes. And J. Rupert Mason was another person that Paul Taylor got me into, and that was 1957.
- Chall: That goes on with water.
- Baum: Yes. And of course, that was Taylor's thing. Oh, and the person, another person who became a great advisor and so on was Jerry [Gerald] Giefer in the Water Resources Center Archives.
- Chall: Yes, and there is a link with Gerald Giefer and Water Resources, and so for a time, you got money from the Water Resources Office, I don't know what it was called, the overall University of California Water Resources [Center]. So the archives—the archives were interested in getting some interviews done.
- Baum: Yes, that was Jerry Giefer. Let's see. I did Durbrow, William Durbrow, irrigation district leader, in 1957. So these were moving right along in the water thing.
- Chall: Yes, that's where it started.
- Baum: Yes. And Jerry Giefer did a number—here he is. Oh, this was way back in 1964 that he did some interviews for us. Claude Hutchison was head of the College of Agriculture.
- Chall: Did you do Hutchison?
- Baum: I did. And that was 1959. Hmm. We did some definitely agriculture people, and then that's where you came in, I think, somewhere early--
- Chall: Yes, and I think you did also Walter Packard and a few others. You were finishing Walter Packard when I started. I think the interviews were done, but the final work on it wasn't.
- Baum: Packard, interviewed 1964 and '66. So--
- Chall: You were interviewing in '64 and '66?
- Baum: Yes, that's quite a ways down the--
- Chall: Yes, that certainly is.
- Baum: Let's see, I did Frank Swett. And that was '61 and '62, so that's—and let's see, by the time we get to Wellman, wow, that's clear in '72.
- Chall: Well, I did Wellman.
- Baum: That was really jumping, yes.

Chall: But—well, to go back, then, into 1958, I’m trying to link the administration with what you were doing—despite the fact that Dr. Bean wasn’t there, and that you had a committee, this so-called subcommittee, it never met. Sanford Mosk had been appointed the chairman. Later Lawrence Kinnaird was put on that committee. Then he was appointed chairman. But in 1958, when Professor Bean returned, he had a meeting with Mr. Coney and Mr. Kinnaird, and they decided to abandon the committee form of management. They were going to have a general faculty advisor with all the supervision handled by the library. Now, that would have meant Mr. Coney. And according to your memos no interviews were to be undertaken except as part of a specific project sponsored by a faculty member and approved for inclusion in the program by Mr. Coney. Did you have—by this time, 1958, you had been promoted the head of the office.⁵

Baum: Yes.

Chall: Let me back up a minute and ask you what it meant to be promoted to head of the office.

Baum: Well, it didn’t mean anything, because there wasn’t anybody there but me.

Chall: It meant a certain wage scale--

Baum: Hardly. I don’t think it meant—[much].

Chall: It was a dollar or something, I think it was. But you had been doing some interviews, and you were enjoying it, apparently. Was there any decision about promoting you and calling you the head of the office? Were they looking—did they even bother to look for anybody else? Did they ever, in all the years that you were so-called head of the office, was there any concern about one, you were a woman, secondly, you didn’t have a PhD? That never was there to haunt you?

Baum: No. It was not a job anybody would have applied for. [laughter]

Chall: I see. Why did you stay on?

Baum: We just drifted on, because—well, I had another job. So I was only there half time or less in all this time.

⁵ Willa’s scrapbook, 1967 – February, 1971, includes a “Description of the Regional Cultural History Project.” It is not dated, but was probably 1965, at which time the RCHP became Regional Oral History Office, a division of The Bancroft Library.

- Chall: What was your other job?
- Baum: I was teaching in the Oakland adult school program. I taught in the mornings from nine to twelve, and then I zipped over and got started at one.
- Chall: I see, at Berkeley.
- Baum: At Berkeley. I had by that time three children, all small. I think by that time, I had—oh, yes, I'd sort of given up really pushing on the PhD. I hadn't given it up, but I couldn't push, because—oh, earning the living for our family was my job. Because my husband was--
- Chall: Paul was getting a PhD?
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: I see. So you had to make a living, whatever it was.
- Baum: Right. So at that point, I had to put my academic plans aside, and I was looking for--. And so the job was a good job for me. I liked it, it was interesting. It was interesting, and it was sporadic. That is, I could leave instantly if something happened to my child that I had to rush home. It fitted very well with a housewife. And in all these years, I was always Dr. Hicks' reader. He had other readers, but I was the head reader. He had a big class on recent U.S. history. So I had just little pots of jobs.
- Chall: I see, and they were all interesting.
- Baum: They were all interesting. Every one was very interesting and fun, yes.
- Chall: The only one that didn't fit into the history was your teaching in the Oakland school.
- Baum: Right, and I gave up teaching—well, that's '66. That was because I had just [tape interruption, telephone call].
- Chall: Okay, so let's go back. Did you have any dealings with Mr. Coney at all during this period? You were [now] in charge.
- Baum: I did.
- Chall: What kind of a relationship did you have with him?
- Baum: Oh, very formal. And I don't remember what we—I don't think we talked about who we were going to interview. He was very fussy, the world's fussiest person.

- Chall: What did he fuss about? Was he interested in your completed work and what it looked like?
- Baum: No, no, no, no. I don't remember what, but I think everybody sort of tip-toed around him. [laughs] And actually, I think he was—later I tried to get money to interview him. I think he was a rather outstanding man, I found out later, when I didn't have to deal with him. [laughter] But yes. Let's see. Most of the time when I was [under] Mr. Coney, it was Mr. [Julian] Michel [with whom I dealt]. That was his assistant.
- Chall: I don't know that your voice is coming through there, Willa. So we'd better put this microphone real close to you. [chatting not transcribed] So you just don't remember that Mr. Coney had much to do with what you were doing in the office here?
- Baum: No.
- Chall: Your plans for interviewing, and any of this kind of thing.
- Baum: No, he was nobody that you would go to for assistance. There were people in the library that—his chief person whom I worked with Mrs. Monahan, Marian Monahan.
- Chall: She came much later, I think, but--
- Baum: Is it later? Oh, because she would help me with getting employees, and she was helpful, and also difficult to deal with sometimes. [laughs]
- Chall: She was difficult too?
- Baum: Ah, everybody. And there was a lovely lady named Helen—oh, and she was Mr. Coney's chief assistant for a while, maybe after Mr. Michel. Life was lovely when she was there.
- Chall: All right. So, Mr. Coney was apparently in charge for a couple of years. According to the notes that I have here, during this period of time when Mr. Bean was away, or even after he returned, between 1958 and 1960, you were mostly doing university history, and a series on Russian immigrants under the director of Professor Charles Jelavich, but it looks as if you were also doing the blind, and something on labor. What about the Russian immigrant history?
- Baum: Okay, the Russian immigrant thing started with Richard Pierce. Richard Pierce was a Russian history PhD from Cal, and he was teaching in Canada. Queens College, somewhere in Canada. He came back every summer and worked in the Bancroft Library, and he was researching Russians in Siberia. A lot of these Russians from Siberia had come to California. He knew the whole [group] up and down the state--

- Chall: They were White Russians who escaped from the revolution?
- Baum: Yes, they were most White Russians. He would interview them, and he was writing books about things. He got out a lot of publications. Somehow he talked to Dr. Jelavich, and Jelavich had said he'd help push it, and so he went to talk to Mr. Coney, I think. Where the funding came from I don't know, but it came mostly to—yes, we got funding to transcribe it, and I think Dick got paid something, I don't know. They turned out to be quite good interviews, but mostly they were a volunteer project of Dick Pierce for years and years and years. We had to weave them into our project, which was not Russians and not Siberia, so they had to be the Russian impact on California or something. So Dick had to be sure and ask them a couple of questions about how they got along in California. [laughs]
- Chall: Okay. So it was a good connection.
- Baum: They were good interviews, yes.
- Chall: Yes, I remember Dick coming into the office all the years that I was there.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: And now you say he's deceased.
- Baum: Yes, he died not very long ago.
- Chall: He wasn't looking well the last time I saw him, which was about 2000, 2001.
- Baum: Yes. His wife died, and he died maybe one or two months later.
- Chall: Now, your staff was increasing, according to the notes, and as far as I can tell, the increase of staff was Amelia [Chita] Fry, and Daniel, let's see. [looking through papers] Edna Daniel and Amelia Fry both came in in 1959. Edna Daniel was there only until '64, but Amelia Fry, whom we call Chita, was there until not too long ago, actually. She remained a member of the staff, even though she moved to Washington, D.C. So how did you happen to get Edna Daniel and Chita on the staff?
- Baum: Well, first, I don't know how I got Edna Daniel, but she was a Cal graduate from maybe 1935.
- Chall: Edna Daniel was?
- Baum: Yes. And she was a history major who during the Depression had gone off to be a nurse, so she was coming back to get back into history, and she did quite a few interviews. During the time she was with us, she went off to, her husband—well, I don't have to tell you about all that. But Chita came through

Bean. Chita had arrived in Berkeley and went to talk to Walt Bean. I don't know what was the connection. She talked to Walt Bean a long time, and he thought she might fit in our office, so he brought her over, and we hired her. She fitted into our office very, very, very well, yes. She became a key operator.

- Chall: I should say. Well, those were the two. Well, let's see. I have somewhere, Suzanne Riess came in--
- Baum: She came 1960. And I think Suzanne was—I think she only came in as a transcriber, and she wasn't even—she first worked for us before she was Riess, Bassett. [Office records show that Suzanne Bassett Riess was hired in January 1959.]
- Chall: And she came in as a transcriber?
- Baum: I can't swear to that, but I think so. Most people just came in in some small way. [laughs]
- Chall: Now, between 1958 and 1960, there wasn't really anybody officially appointed as a faculty advisor. In October 1960, the centennial project was terminated. Then Milczewski apparently left the library, went somewhere else, I think to Seattle. An assistant librarian, Julian Michel, replaced Milczewski as the supervisor of the project under Coney.
- Baum: Yes, that's right.
- Chall: I guess Bean was still there, but he was an unofficial advisor.
- Baum: Let's see. Well, he canceled the writing the history of the university.
- Chall: Oh, he did?
- Baum: Or he turned down—he was the official appointed, and that's why he had this funding, to document the university and all that. And then I think he gave up the job, and partly it was because he was... You weren't supposed to talk to regents. When I was there, you were not allowed as staff or something to talk to regents. So--
- Chall: Oh, and he was on the staff, of course.
- Baum: Also, I think he tried to get the regents, minutes of their meetings, and he wasn't allowed to get that either. He said, "How can I write a history of the university if I can't talk to regents and I can't read the minutes of the meetings? I can't do it." It would be just a job that he would not win academic acclaim for. He was going to write a brilliant—and so he just gave up on that.

- Chall: Oh, I see, so that's the reason.
- Baum: Yes. So he continued, he always was a dear friend and we always talked to him. He'd come over for dinner, we—but he gave up on that one.
- Chall: Well, now, then when Julian Michel replaced Milczewski, and the project was still under Coney, basically, your budget was reduced from \$17,000 to \$15,000, so that was a considerable reduction. It was then coming from Letters and Science. So there were Edna Daniel, Amelia Fry, Suzanne Riess, and you. With I guess a couple of transcribers. But at that time, you claimed that there were eighty-five interviews completed or in process. And the greatest number were in fields of university history, law and politics, business, literature, publishing, art, and photography, social welfare, conservation, and Russian émigrés. That is quite a list. So apparently, you really had moved into other fields. How did all this come about? We hadn't even started--
- Baum: I can't remember who they were. Let's see. If I knew which the interviews were...
- Chall: Well, let's see.
- Baum: If we had them organized by when they were done, you know. What did Edna Daniel do?
- Chall: I'm going to turn this off again momentarily. [tape interruption to review catalogue] Let me set the stage here, as it were. We've been trying to figure out how you could have had eighty-five interviews completed or in process in these various fields [by 1960], but obviously, as we looked it over, it was quite possible. As you look it over, what kind of feeling do you have about the whole ROHO process and what you had done, just by looking at these entries in the catalogue? Does that give you a feeling of pride?
- Baum: Oh, yes. And I think—I look at these marvelous people we interviewed. I mean, what an opportunity for anybody to have these people pass before their eyes! So this was what was so exciting and interesting.
- [End audiofile 6, begin audiofile 7 (tape 2, side A)]
- Chall: During 1961-65, Julian Michel was working under Mr. Coney, and you had to deal with him. I gather that he was more difficult to deal with than Mr. Milczewski.
- Baum: Yes, I liked Mr. Milczewski.
- Chall: They had charge of your budget, and how you supervised the office, and things of this kind?

- Baum: That's what they nominally had charge of, but you know, those people can't possibly do all the things that they're assigned to do, unless they worked twenty-four hours a day.
- Chall: But at one point, Mr. Michel was concerned about Edna Daniel, because she was going abroad, and she planned to work on projects which were unfunded. She was going to take them with her, I understand. He objected to that. I don't know what that time was, but she only stayed until 1964, so it may have been then. He wouldn't allow her to work abroad with those transcripts, would he?
- Baum: I cannot remember. I do remember the tremendous battle we had, because Edna's husband had a two-year job in Switzerland, and she was going off with him, and she wouldn't have anything to do but sit in her apartment in Switzerland and edit all the manuscripts she had. That was perfectly fine with me, and Mr. Michel thought that it would be possibly dangerous, or I don't know what, to take these manuscripts out of the office. We did have the idea that nobody should look at the manuscripts until they were finished by the person, but nobody would have them except Edna. Maybe they would fall in the water while they were being mailed backward and forward, I don't know. I can't remember if that's pre-Xerox.
- Chall: Oh, yes, it was pre-Xerox. I think so. I think this was still the carbon paper.
- Baum: Was it? Because pre-Xerox, it was dangerous to take anything. And pre-Xerox was a very hard time in terms of your copies.
- Chall: Well, actually in 1964, I'm not sure. You might have had the Xerox then.
- Baum: But anyway, I do not remember whether Edna took the things or not, or she finished whatever interviews.
- Chall: We might be able to check that out.
- Baum: She did come back.
- Chall: Maybe we could look in the catalogue again and find it out. But also, Mr. Michel did something which, according to your memo to him in the files, indicated that he assigned Suzanne Riess to interview the chief justice—I assume this is Warren. And you were—well, you wrote back to him that we assign our interviewers on the basis of their background. Suzanne Riess was not an interviewer in the political field, she was in arts and other fields of that kind. Chita Fry, Amelia Fry, was planning to do—going to be assigned to do the political history. So the gist of that memo to him was that he had no right to do this. Of course, I can't imagine that he thought he had the right to make this assignment.

- Baum: Yes, and I really do not remember that, Malca. It must have been so egregious that I [laughing]—
- Chall: Right, [your communication with him] was on blue memo paper, as I recall.
- Baum: I should ask Suzanne about that, because I presume that something in conversation between Michel and Suzanne as passing in the hall, they chattered, and he just came up with an idea.
- Chall: Well, you're right, it is egregious. You also had problems that would have been problems, I guess no matter who was in charge, and that had to do with routing calls, phone calls to the office. People could ask for history office, the oral office, the recording office, and whatever other names, and they meant to have them come to you, but [central phone staff] didn't know it. So you felt that there ought to be something quite discrete about your name and the phone number, to get the calls routed through to you.
- Then there was some kind of discussion about use of the time clocks. Were you just beginning to use a time clock then, do you recall?
- Baum: I don't recall when we started using the time clock. I do recall that from time to time, there was a flurry about time clocks. There was always a flurry about time clocks and timing with the library's technical things, and some interviewers or workers—because they didn't necessarily work in the office. Lots of our work was done out where you're interviewing, or in some library where you're researching, or editing at home, or whatever. So time clocks didn't work very well. However, there are people who are insulted by time clocks, and they think that shows that they're a lower caste staff member or something. I did have some fights with that, I think at a later time, people who were insulted. I always insisted on using the time clock myself, because I mostly worked on—I mean, I could fill in some other hours, but I didn't want to keep track in a little notebook every minute I was working, and then when I went home and this and that. I thought, If this automatic clock can do that, that's swell. [laughs]
- Chall: Yes. And I think you did work out eventually an idea that they would clock in when they got [to this office], but they would also put in, in pen, their other times when they weren't in the office but were working on ROHO projects. And I remember we always used to do that, so that that seemed to satisfy the--
- Baum: And then there was the terrible problem, which continues every time, that at the end of the month, people were supposed to turn in their hours. And their hours, many of them were written in their notebook, and they had to turn it in. They also had to say what project they were working on, so that you would know what project to charge for those hours. There were people who positively could not do that, absolutely could not do that, and I think that there

still are—I mean, I don't know how they're handling it now, but it never was a solvable problem.

- Chall: Yes. And further on in time, I noticed that you also had to begin to put statistics into your annual reports. It had to work in with the money that we were getting. So it became a system that meant you had to know what we did on certain projects. I noticed eventually, you had a problem just deciding what project to assign a certain amount of time to. [It's in one of your notes to staff who was keeping these accounts, that, for example, the [Walter] Lowdermilk project] must be charged to water resources. You always had to keep close tabs on [where the money was going.]
- Baum: And that would have happened, of course, only after we had separate moneys.
- Chall: Right, and it got harder and harder--
- Baum: It got harder and harder, because we had all sorts of projects, each one funded by a certain donation, usually, or a grant; not mostly grants, mostly donations; that had to go to this subject or this person's interview. That was specially hard for transcribers or secretaries, or people who did general kind of work. It wasn't a problem in the beginning, because we only had one budget. You worked or you didn't work. But how are you going to assign a staff meeting?
- Chall: Yes, it got to be difficult. As you say, some of the people who were doing lots of things, it might have been typing fifteen minutes on this project and another twenty-five minutes working on another project.
- Baum: It is difficult. I thought we had really worked that out as well as it could be. There's no way that you can get it accurate.
- Chall: Gradually I noticed that your yellow sheets, your little half-sheets of yellow paper, on which you began to assign a project, you would have, in your own handwriting, the name of a project, and underneath it, the names of people that you had assigned to that project, and what was being done: interviewing, transcribing, indexing, et cetera. As I looked at one of those early sheets, it brought to mind that you were struggling in the early years to keep tabs on this. In a sense, a lot of it was a learning process for you.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: Did this cause a certain amount of anxiety in you, as you were trying to figure out how to deal with these problems?
- Baum: Yes, but not bad—I mean, there were all kinds of problems that caused anxiety. Those things usually were worked out, particularly with the head secretary or the person who was sort of in charge of all the office staff, and

who collected what people worked on. We spent a lot of time sitting together talking about how we can organize this.

Chall: So if you had a really good person in that position, it was easier for you.

Baum: Oh, yes.

Chall: And how would you be able to hire somebody that would be good? Was that just an accident?

Baum: Oh, that was an accident. [laughs] Sometimes it was a real accident! A few times we got somebody who wasn't good.

Chall: And you needed that help.

Baum: Oh, well, somebody had to do all that, yes. And it was a complex job. Also, as time went on, personnel rules got more complex—from the library, or from the university. We had to interview so many people. We had one position, and we interviewed six or eight people, and then you had to turn in a paper that said who you hired, and the other seven, why you didn't hire them. And the only real reason you didn't hire them was that you only had one position. [laughs] You can't hire eight people for one position! That was the real reason. And to try and—some people were better than others, some of my head secretaries, of trying to devise an acceptable reason why you didn't hire somebody, when probably it's just that you can't hire—I don't know why personnel programs put themselves up like that. There's no way you can hire two people in one job.

But we continued to have more and more personnel problems like that. And life became just how to wiggle around the rules in a way that we could still get good people—oh, and the library got really angry if you got somebody who wasn't good, because then they had to go through getting rid of them. And that was a nightmare.

Chall: Oh, yes. I remember a few of those. [laughter] Right.

Baum: Oh, you didn't know whether you were coming or going.

Chall: And these were really the secretaries, the transcribers--

Baum: Could be interviewers.

Chall: Well, I don't remember having to let a few interviewers go, but I remember it mostly with clericals.

Baum: Yes, I don't think we let—we were very lucky at who we got for interviewers. More or less.

- Chall: The interviewers—well, we'll go down the list later on. Later on you hired so many. And then there was a period of time when there was a freeze on hiring, so then you really had to figure out how to deal with it. Later on we'll talk about some of the people who stayed a long, long time, not just interviewers but people from the clerical staff.
- Baum: Sometimes we'd work out contracts, or oh, we had all sorts of methods, and I'd say devious, but they were only devious about getting around the rules. They were not devious in—the goals were always the same. The university or everybody's goal was to get a good employee.
- Chall: Eventually, we had to start filling out the reports on how people worked, what were those reports called?
- Baum: Oh, yes, evaluations. Ah! That's a part of the job that's no fun.
- Chall: Now, [back to the early years and some of the problems between you and the librarians]. Mr. Michel wanted the Regional Cultural History Project, to pay for binding the interviews. I guess you were thinking about the interviews that went to the Bancroft Library, but he said it was on our charge, we had to pay for that. So that was one of the discussions you had with Mr. Michel.
- Baum: That was a continuing battle. I think way past Mr. Michel's time, the Bancroft Library was—we sent them an unbound manuscript, and then they sent it out to be bound. That was okay, but they had—they only sent it out every six months or something. They had lots of things they sent out in one batch. So pretty soon, people were all rushing into the Bancroft to get this newly released oral history, and it was by no means available, simply because it hadn't gotten onto the Bancroft Library's binding schedule. Let's see, I don't remember how we got around that either. But there were always little snaggles like that. They kept life bouncing around, bouncing—you didn't know whether you were focusing on real questions or non-questions.
- Chall: Well, you certainly were focusing on a lot of oddball stuff, I must say. Which sort of took away from focusing on the work at hand that was really important.
- Now, you also mentioned, I think, that Mr. Michel was responsible for erasing the John Francis Neylan tapes?
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: How did that come about?
- Baum: Well, John Francis Neylan was one of the very first interviews we did, as you recall, and it was recorded by Corinne Gilb and Walton Bean. Walton Bean sat in on that. I mean, he sat in as the head interviewer, and he and John

Francis Neylan went head to head on a lot of things, because John Francis Neylan was always—he wouldn't step back on anything, ever. And Walton Bean was going to be a famous professor, was a famous professor, and he couldn't step back either, in what would be published or on the record. And so they would argue, sort of. It was funny to read the transcript, because Walton Bean always used nice academic languages to ask Neylan a question. You could see Neylan was thinking, "What is he getting at?" [laughs] You could tell, and then Neylan would blast at-- So I've always used that as an example of why we shouldn't have a professor, or somebody with a reputation of who they are, interviewing somebody else, because they cannot sit back as a good interviewer does and just get that person's opinion. They could not let this opinion that they did not want to be affiliated with stand. They had to argue about it. [laughs]

So anyway, that always fits in with my stories of who should be an interviewer. But anyway, it took a long time. That got transcribed, and Neylan didn't get to editing it, and it went on and on. Everyone knew it was there. It was related primarily to what the university was interested in, the loyalty oath. Somewhere along the line, for what many reasons I don't know, Mr. Coney got worried that people would listen to the tape before it had been edited, that it would be dangerous. Because the faculty were still fighting with each other tooth and nail over which part different ones took in that loyalty oath battle. So he asked us or demanded to take the tapes and put them in safekeeping in his office, and so he did. Then later, I heard—he didn't tell me—that he had had Mr. Michel erase them all. Because they were dangerous, they could cause a fight or something.

Chall: What a blow that must have been to you.

Baum: Yes, that was a terrible, terrible blow. I had transcribed those, those were when I first came in. I knew the significance of personality and all that came in on Neylan, a very significant character in all kinds of issues in California, of which the loyalty oath was just a minute little speck in his life.

Chall: And you had got a lot of his life.

Baum: Oh, yes, we got his whole life. Yes, it wasn't just on the loyalty oath. And so they're gone.

Chall: Ah. That hurts.

Baum: And that's the same story as having Mr. Coney or Mr. Michel or somebody assigned or take part in the--

Chall: Didn't tapes always from that time on go into the Bancroft Library? Eventually.

- Baum: At that time, our tapes didn't go into the Bancroft Library. I think we were still on the days when we only erased—I don't know when we stopped that.
- Chall: I don't either, because let's see--
- Baum: It would not have been in any official--.
- Chall: [looking through papers] What I have here is an article that was written by Corinne Gilb in the *American Archivist*, October 1957, which I think is significant, because it was really in '57 you were getting started, the oral history office.⁶
- Baum: It was a good article, as I recall.
- Chall: It was a good article, and I think that it's important, because she indicated or said that the Regional Cultural History Project interviews about an average of about four sessions, one and a half to two hours each. And that they might be longer. And that a good typist can transcribe it in four to six hours, a literal transcription. There's an original and two carbons. One copy is a literal copy. She says it's unedited and goes into a file drawer. (I remember doing that forever.) Then an original copy is edited and sent to the interviewee for his editing. This is the part that I don't understand: one copy is a replica of the editor's editing, which had been sent to the interviewee, and that's put away. When you did a replica of the editor's editing, did you have to do it again, on a carbon copy?
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: You did?
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: My goodness. That's a real job.
- Baum: Yes, it was too much work.
- Chall: It was a lot of work, and I couldn't imagine having to do that twice.
- Baum: We didn't want to mail out the—we only had, what was it, three copies? I thought maybe four--
- Chall: That's right, one original and two copies, at that time.

⁶ "Tape Recorded Interviewing: Some Thoughts from California." *American Archivist*, vol xx, No. 4 October, 1957.

- Baum: Well, and we always had, what did we call that in our file drawer? It was the copy that the editor made because we thought, if this gets lost in the mail and the editor has already spent a lot of time on it, and if we don't have a copy, that time will be lost.
- Chall: Yes, and we always did have this edited copy that went into the drawer [insurance copy]. But when I realized that that had to be done on a carbon, it just meant that you were doing two things: you had your original that you were editing for the interviewee, and then you had to make a copy of it at the same time, or later--
- Baum: Later.
- Chall: So when we got to Xeroxing, it was certainly a lot easier.
- Baum: Oh, Xeroxing made, I thought, more difference than practically anything. Nobody knows how difficult life was when we didn't have any copies!
- Chall: I'll go ahead with this. She said also that the interviewer can cut out tangled sentences, and cut out, looks like indecisive—can't read my own handwriting—well, idiosyncrasies, I think is what she said.
- Baum: I would not think it would be idiosyncrasies.
- Chall: I'll have to go back and look at that. [irrelevancies]
- Baum: Because I think that's what we would leave in.
- Chall: [She wrote that you] put afterthoughts where they belong, which meant you cut it out and pasted it in. And then you could suggest additional questions when you sent it off. Then she indicated that "We," meaning the project, "adds first names and identifying phrases."
- Baum: And we marked it with--
- Chall: You marked it in some way. [We used brackets.]
- Baum: We indicated as an addition, that the person didn't say that.
- Chall: And then [she wrote that] we put in chapter headings and an interview history. But this is what I found interesting: she said, regarding the tapes, that parts of the tape have been rough edited. They can be filed away for more polished editing at a later date. Is that what you did? Actually edited the tapes?
- Baum: No, what we had always told people that if they wanted to remove something, we would take it off the tape. We would have to go through the tape and just erase that.

Chall: I see. That isn't quite clear in this, in her article, but that's what you were doing actually. You weren't just rough editing tapes as if you were editing the transcript.

Baum: No, no. But we kept only one tape, and sometimes we kept only ten minutes. And so that was some editing in that we had to decide which ten minutes to keep.

Chall: Yes, I remember that when I came in in 1967, that that's what you were doing. And then eventually we kept them all.

Baum: Yes. We erased all the rest, partly because we didn't think anybody would want to hear them; two, because we needed the tapes to use again. And then we later realized that—well, tapes became cheaper, for one thing. It was cheaper to just keep all the tapes, even though they would take up space. When you talk about cost, the space was a bigger cost than the actual tape.

[end tape 2, side A; begin side B]

Baum: Okay, it was Corinne and my original idea that we would make these—that these tapes were wonderful teaching items, and that people, that professors would want to use them in their lectures or something. So we would make them—we picked out, maybe we did one or two, what we thought would be terribly significant about this person, and we would pick out ten minutes. We made edited tapes that were suitable for playing in a lecture class. We naturally planned to index them, that the faculty could get ahold of them, and-. Anyway, nobody ever asked for our edited tapes, of which we had only a few, and naturally, when you think about it, no matter how cleverly you thought about it, you would never get the piece that the faculty member that was wanting to use it would want to use. So we could not—and of course, later, we decided that we're going to just put a lot more on the researcher. At the time we started, we were an A-1 service agency, and we really were going to fix this up so faculty could use all the pieces, and it would just really be splendid. [laughs]

Chall: Now, of course, you had the legal agreement, and clearly that was part of it. Then she said that not all oral histories were sent to the Bancroft Library. Some went to the Bancroft Library, and other parts of the general library of the university. And then there was always one in the project office. She said labor [interviews] went to the Institute of Industrial Relations library at Berkeley. And maybe UCLA.

Baum: No—well, way back in those days it couldn't be to UCLA, because we only had [three?] copies. We did retype so there still were--

Chall: You just made three copies of—[the finished interview?]

Baum: --a maximum of four.

Chall: In 1961 [February 15th and 16th] there was an interesting series of discussions [via memos] with you about Xeroxing the fourth copy. Now, apparently in 1961, Xerox was available, and so there was a memo between you and—I don't know who it was, it must have been Michel at that time—whether to Xerox or just make a fourth carbon. And you opted for the fourth carbon. I'm not really sure that I can remember why. I think it was easier to put that piece of paper into the typewriter as long as you were typing it than to go to some other office and have it Xeroxed. And the fourth carbon would have been for what purpose?

Baum: The final type. So there'd be the interviewee, and the major library--

Chall: Right, and ROHO. [RCHP until 1965]

Baum: --and ROHO, and then there would—maybe, I forget when we started the UCLA exchange, there was a certain date--

Chall: Well, I'm not sure, because also in 1961 [July 29] there was a memo regarding the exchange of catalogue cards with UCLA, and--

Baum: [laughs] That early?

Chall: Yes, and “at present,” you said, “the Regional Cultural History Project has no catalogue card.” But I'm not sure where the fourth carbon would have gone. So there must have been occasion for a fourth carbon.

Baum: I can't remember that, but I do remember over and over again we fought with the purchasing department on carbon paper. Just on carbon paper, because--

Chall: The cost of carbon paper? And ribbons?

Baum: No, carbon paper was—because we used to buy our own or the library did. We got our own carbon paper, and we worked very hard on analyzing with which carbon paper the fourth copy or the last copy was legible. And then they suddenly came to one of these money-saving deals where the university as a whole, including UCLA and whatever else there was at that time, would buy stuff en masse. And so they got these carbon papers and sent us them, we ordered so many boxes of carbon papers, they sent it to us. Well, naturally, the fourth copy didn't come out. We were fighting all the time, because they said, “We have to get it through the purchasing,” and I said, “I can't use the purchasing, because it won't go through. It's a cheap carbon and it won't go.” And that came up probably twice or more in the time of my career. Oh, and after that, it became tapes or machines, whether the purchasing, it had to be done en masse. And--

- Chall: And just some things couldn't be done that way, for our office.
- Baum: Yes. It was, I'm sure—I mean, it went through the whole university, always these people were going to--
- Chall: Save you money.
- Baum: Making something—yes.
- Chall: Well, little things that you had to fight for.
- Baum: Oh, they could take up more time. [laughs] You had to fight your way first through the library, because it had its own system; and then after that, they had to, if they were willing to take it on, they'd take on the purchasing department. [laughs]
- Chall: Well, this, I thought, was an interesting article by Corinne Gilb, because it really laid out the way you did things, and certainly they were basically the same all the way through, with the exception of maybe what to do with the tape.
- We haven't talked about your relationship with Corinne Gilb, but the two of you worked together so closely. It looks as if you really started together [to lay out] the way the oral history office eventually operated, and this was really just the two of you together, thinking it through. So what generally was Corinne like to work with? How did you work with her?
- Baum: Well, as I say, since we were really not an office or a staff, it was not really—we didn't have the, so-and-so is in rank order, who orders who around. So we didn't—I mean, it was like an issue that at least I don't recall it coming up. I'm sure if we had a battle, that Corinne would have won. I wouldn't have battled her. But on the other hand, I don't think we had a battle.
- Chall: Was she very strong, a strong person?
- Baum: Oh, man. Yes. Definitely. And there was a time, we were both pregnant, and I think it was probably—because 1954 is when I started, that's when Eric was born, and the next child was 1956. Must have been about the time of—and that may have been, Corinne was pregnant too. That's when her second child was born. And so there were times when we didn't really—we had these huge tape recorders, oh!
- Chall: Yes, and they were heavy!
- Baum: And we had these big dollies. Corinne was pregnant before I was, because I got all her maternity clothes. [laughs] But then there was a time when we went to her house, we just sat in her house, and we went through all—we listened to

the interviews we had, and we analyzed what kind of questions seemed to get an answer, and which dropped dead. We prepared a fine notebook, which has always been in the office, and I think nobody's paid much attention to it, because we were trying to analyze what kind of questions work, what kind of approaches worked, and so on. Then after we—we had to drop all that, I guess we didn't have to stay home any more, so we never really developed that. It would have been a manual on questions or something that we were going to work on.

Chall: Good idea.

Baum: Yes. So it was kind of fun, listening to these tapes, hour by hour, and jotting down and arguing back and forth about what worked and what didn't work.

Chall: Well, you probably had a pretty good idea, very good idea at that point.

Baum: I think—aha. [interruption for dog, Charlotte, and her removal from the scene]

Chall: All right. I've even forgotten where we were.

Baum: Oh, these things are jumping around so, it looks like the kind of transcript that we'd have to groom.

Chall: No, because I think—because to go straight through doesn't work.

Baum: No, because things don't go chronologically.

Chall: Things don't go chronologically. They fit together, like what we did about [the interview process]. It's important to know how we started the interviews, and actually, it has been all the same, except that we began to use Xeroxes instead of carbons, and things got a little more difficult along the way. But this was the basic, I mean, you and Corinne did start the real basic stuff.

When you were talking about learning good questions, it occurred to me that right after I interviewed Dr. Lowdermilk for the first time, you called my house—it was on a Saturday, I think—and you told me that you had been listening to the tape, and gave me some clues about questions, and about asking too many questions at one time, or something of this kind. And I really felt just sort of—well, upset a little. It was a perfectly right thing to do, and Harold [Chall] said, "Well, that was really very good. She wants you to do a good job, and so she's giving you some good advice." And I realized that he was really right-on. He was absolutely right. I don't think that I've ever totally improved, [laughs] but you were right.

I also remember in terms of interviewing that you had told me when I started that we were to interview a person's back life, something about his parents and other aspects of his education and things. You said that originally when

you had started to interview in the earliest days, that you had really gone right into the career, and that it was professors of psychology or social welfare who had indicated to you that you didn't really get the whole person until you had this kind of background, so you started to add it to your interviews. Is that something that you remember?

Baum: Yes. I do, and also, when we started—especially Corinne was very definite, you could get—we could get the essence of anybody in two to four hours. It was a very arrogant point of view, I think, and Corinne was an arrogant person. So we started out with very short interviews that went right to the heart of whatever we were interested in, and they were short. It was only later that we began to realize that they were too short, that you couldn't get what you wanted. I don't know if Corinne ever agreed on that, because she always was right to the point. We did have some of our interviews analyzed by a little group of faculty, and I can't remember why or how, but I know that they turned in notes on what they thought about it. One turned in notes that, "What is all this blather about their early life? We don't need this, it's too expensive. Just get to the point."

And the other ones turned in the notes, "You don't have any background here, we can't analyze this, we can't use it!" [laughs] And so we realized that different people wanted different things, and we'd just have to work out what we could do depending on our budget. And again, as you know, you analyze whether you interview some persons two hours on just the issue they were involved in, or do you get their whole life from beginning to end. [laughs] But we did try to get faculty assistance and get help on how to do these things, try to make them the best we could. And it was fun, because it was—it had an academic sort of vision that we were trying to get the best of something, we were going to work this out.

Chall: Well, you did have a good vision of what you were doing, even though you really never knew whether you were going to exist or not over a period of time.

Baum: Yes. And I don't think we thought we were going to exist necessarily, because neither one of us were heading to be an oral historian.

Chall: Yes. And what has Corinne Gilb done since she left? She left [to] the Institute of Industrial Relations--

Baum: Let's see, she went to the Institute of Industrial Relations, which probably had more money. Or I don't know, but she did do interviews for a couple of years, maybe two years, at the Institute of Industrial Relations. It had just set up a similar office. Oh, our office did their transcribing. And then she went off to—she got a very fine job, I think in Detroit, or somewhere. She has been a significant academic person. And I keep meaning to look up her books and see what she's—I haven't kept track of her.

- Chall: What about Edna Daniel?
- Baum: Oh, well, Edna eventually--
- Chall: She didn't stay very long.
- Baum: She didn't stay terribly long. It was because her husband kept getting these—he'd set up dried vegetable plants, like for Knorr soups. He went to Switzerland and set up factories for them, and then he went to France and he'd set up factories there. He was in Germany for a while setting up dried—some kind of industrial engineer.
- Chall: I see. So her years had to be cut short, as they were. But she did quite a few interviews, we noticed, when we were going through the catalogue.
- Baum: When we started, she did quite a few. And she was a hard—I decided she wasn't a good interviewer, and so I wasn't sorry that she left. But the reason was, she was so focused, so firm. And she studied her man, and then she figured out what he thought and why he did these things. And then she asked questions of him to get that answer.
- Chall: And it would get either a yes or a no most of the time.
- Baum: Well, she'd get—and what I'd later—some of the interviewees later, much later, would tell me they weren't happy. It was like Edna was pushing them into being a man they weren't. And she used to do that to me too. She'd say, "I know that you put your kids to bed at seven," or something—you know, something that was proper. And then she'd try to tell me what I do. I'd say, "Edna, I don't put the kids to bed at seven." [laughs] I was always fighting her because she was telling me what I do, which was so good, and that's because I was such a good person. Well, she certainly thought her interviewees were good persons; gad, they were all saints. And some of them were resisting being sainted. [laughs] So it's a certain kind of person who kind of figures things out and then tries to make it fall in the slot.
- Chall: Now, when you picked out—not picked out—when you hired other interviewers over a period of time, most of them stayed a long, long time. So you ultimately were satisfied with their work and what they were bringing in, in terms of maybe grants and whatnot. So if you had somebody that you thought was really doing a very, very poor job, what would you do?
- Baum: I'm trying to think who I had that was doing a poor job. I think I--
- Chall: Well, we have Irene Prescott who came in 1960. She didn't stay very long.

- Baum: And that's because she went off to become social—head of International House. She'd been something terribly significant, I forget, and she was retired from that. No, I was perfectly satisfied with her work, she was brilliant. I mean, people--
- Chall: I guess the reason that we have lists here is probably because these are the people who stayed. They were listed in the catalogue.
- Baum: But probably, if they did an interview--
- Chall: And then there were some who came in, maybe over a period of time, I'll have some names of people who didn't stay. I have Adrienne Fish. [1969]
- Baum: She was a transcriber.
- Chall: Transcriber, yes.
- Baum: Oh, no, and here—yes. Okay. This list here—doesn't say what it is, does it? They are people who did maybe one interview, or a volunteer interview. [Chall interrupting, speaking over Baum]
- Chall: Right, they might have been volunteer.
- Baum: Yes, a lot of people donated, interviewers—here's Steve Fisher.
- Chall: Yes. Well, maybe we'll pick that up as we go along.
- Baum: And June Hogan, she did some, and we hired her [1969]. It was nothing to do with her interviewing why she left.
- Chall: Well, I noticed that at one time she was reclassified. I guess meaning that she was reclassified—so was Alice King—to the higher level. So she must have started as an [editor] one and became a two.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: But she didn't come until '69.
- Baum: Yes. She was a newspaper reporter,--
- Chall: Oh, yes, I remember, she came in to help with the Earl Warren project.
- Baum: That sounds right, yes. Edith Mezirow [1964], she--
- Chall: Yes, well now, these people came in later. Edith Mezirow worked out of Washington, DC, didn't she?

- Baum: No, she was here. But then she went to Washington, and that's why she wasn't here any more. Elwood Maunder. He did some interviews for us, but he was the head of the Forest History Society. [reviewing a list of names of person who had done interviews for ROHO on a contractual basis, page 106 of Catalogue I.]
- Chall: Oh, yes, that's right. No, I'm thinking of people on our staff. Well, let me, in the little time that we have left on this tape, let me go ahead here then--
- Baum: Estolv Ward. [laughs]
- Chall: Then we can get something. [murmuring, shuffling papers]
- Baum: Evelyn Fairburn. I didn't think she was good. Oh, I remember who she was.
- Chall: I'll turn this off, then, if you're—[tape interruption] I'm going to move a little backward now, because I'm interested in one of the meetings, when you had a faculty committee. This is 1962, when they were still mulling over what to do with this Regional Cultural History Project. We've just gone through today what you did in '55, '56, '58, up to '60. You had eighty-five projects in '60 that were in process or finished, and still they're mulling over, in '62 what to do about you. So there was a committee meeting from three to five in the afternoon on December 14, 1962. Michael Goodman was the—this was called the Faculty Committee Meeting to Review the RCHP. Michael Goodman was the chairman, and among the others were George Foster, Woodrow Borah, George Hammond, and Henry Smith. The resource people were Walter Bean, Willa Baum, and Dr. Hart, but he wasn't able to be there that day. George Foster was in anthropology. Woodrow Borah was a man who was in Latin American affairs?
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: Okay. George Hammond, was he in the Bancroft Library at that time?
- Baum: In '62?
- Chall: '62, yes.
- Baum: I suppose he'd be the director. Jim Hart was supposed to be there too.
- Chall: No, he wasn't there at that time.
- Baum: No, okay, well, then Dr. Hammond was the head of the Bancroft.
- Chall: And then Henry Smith, I don't know who Henry--

- Baum: Henry Nash Smith was the English professor, and he also had all the Mark Twain papers, and he was working on the Mark Twain project.
- Chall: Okay. Now, [I'm going to give you some of the drama of that meeting]: Woodrow Borah said that there must be poor liaison in the project if the people didn't know that it had lost faculty for two years. Remember that when Bean came back, we talked about that. [He met with Dr. Coney and Professor Kinnaird, and decided to abandon the committee form of management.] You didn't know it, so you kept talking to Dr. Bean. You didn't know that you didn't have a faculty committee.
- Baum: That he wasn't the faculty--
- Chall: That's right. So Professor Borah said the library should not run such a project, that more direction is necessary. He fought all the way through this meeting, because [he claimed] you needed more direction. And I guess that seems to be a theme that you had to deal with all the way through your career there, right?
- Baum: Yes. And that would have been Woodrow Borah in every subject he ever touched. [laughs]
- Chall: I see. So this was his personality. All right. There was a lot of discussion about, should the project be directly under the TBL—Bancroft Library—or a subcommittee of the TBL, or should it be in the history department. Bean said no, on the history department. It belongs in TBL. Borah said a Bancroft subcommittee would be indolent. More direction is needed.
- Baum: [laughs] See--
- Chall: And Dr. Hammond immediately took umbrage, he objected. [laughter] I'm just getting all this—it's very dramatic. I'm only reading to you from a memo! I think it was blue paper, I'm not sure.
- Then there was discussion about were those interviewed good selections or not. You discussed the fact that nuances were useful. They were probably all useful [for California history] except for the Russian émigrés. They didn't really know how they fitted in.
- Baum: Yes, and that's what I told you, that they didn't really, weren't really California.
- Chall: So finally they decided that the project was useful, and the committee moved to continue the RCHP. Then they moved that the original statement of purpose, which they discussed, was sufficiently broad to merit continuation of the work of the project. Then some consideration was given to training graduate students, but they finally left that out of the statement, because no one could see its value to the project.

Regarding administration--

Baum: That's where they are now, isn't it? Back to the training--

Chall: [Then the committee decided that] there should be a faculty director. And this, I've never been able to figure this one out, but I don't know whether you ever dealt with it: there should be a faculty director responsible to some faculty agency (probably already existing) and assisted by an advisory committee reporting a wide variety of points of view. That was their discussion about how you were to be administered. Then they decided the name should be changed to Regional Oral History blank, and the word was left blank so that the decision could be made when the office was finally placed somewhere—I was unsure what this meant. Now, you had to—you were writing these minutes, and you had to put them into proper order. I think there was some discussion with some of the peers up here about whether you should leave certain things out of the discussion [final draft] or put them in, and it was decided that you should—it should be pretty clear about what everybody was saying. That was '62. In '63, the project became a research unit of the College of Letters and Science, and it was jointly administered by a subcommittee of the faculty library committee with Professor Walton Bean in charge, the chairman. He agreed at some point that he would keep working with you no matter what.

[End audiofile 7, end of session]

Interview with Willa Baum
Interviewed by Malca Chall
Interview 5: February 23, 2005]
[Begin audiofile 8 (tape 3, side A)]

- Chall: [tests tape] All right, we are starting. When we left off last time, primarily we were talking about the 1962 faculty committee overseeing the Regional Cultural History Project. Michael Goodman was the chairman of that committee.
- Baum: Oh, yes.
- Chall: And just as we left, you said that Michael Goodman had been very important to ROHO at that time, and so you wanted to talk about him. So I thought we'd start with Michael Goodman.
- Baum: I didn't know Michael Goodman, I don't know why he got appointed to this committee, and neither did he. He was a professor of architecture, and so he came over, a small, small European man. I think he was European; yes, I think he had an accent. Very bustle-y. I mean, he moved fast. And he was involved at that time. I got to know him pretty well. He was building a building right near where the optometry building is now on campus, and it was a building for—it was a round building, and it had to do with the way they wanted to—don't put this in especially, because it doesn't matter—but he was building a round so that the staff, all the people there, would mingle together. They didn't want it to be a kind of building where people sit in their cubicles. So he was designing that, and then I remember at the end, he was doing decorations, and he wanted me to come over and look at all the different models he had, and try to think which ones—I'm sure he was asking everyone—which ones--
- Chall: Did he build it?
- Baum: Yes, it's there, I looked at it just last night. It was right there, lurking away. [Calvin Laboratory, Chemical Biodynamics building].
- Chall: It's near the--?
- Baum: It's near the optometry building, and just sort of to the side of the new business school. Which wasn't there then. Well, that's neither here nor there.
- Chall: No, but that shows that—it is interesting that he would have been asked to be on this committee.
- Baum: Yes, I don't know why he was asked to be on that committee, and I can't remember who else was, and you probably have [the list]. It doesn't matter, because I didn't--

- Chall: Yes, I had the names that we've discussed, and they were mostly people in history, Paul Taylor and T. J. Kent and people like that.
- Baum: Michael Goodman came to our office a number of times and observed. I thought he really paid attention to his committee assignments. The others I didn't ever see, but he drafted statements, and we'd go over these statements that he drafted about what ROHO was doing and so on. So I just thought that he was a very conscientious committee member and chairman. And I'm sure he had to do with preserving ROHO. I mean, I don't know if it was going to be wiped out, but I think that he probably had something to do with maintaining its individuality or its existence.
- Chall: Well, in that committee report that we talked about last week, that Woodrow Borah was on and Dr. Hammond, there was a lot of discussion about ROHO [RCHP] and whether it should even exist.
- Baum: That's right.
- Chall: And they decided that it should. So it was just briefly after that, in 1965, that the name was changed to—well, they decided it needed a name change, but they didn't know how to put in the blank. It should be Regional Oral History blank. So you've told me, I think, at one time, that there was some discussion in those years about the word Office, as opposed to something else.
- Baum: Yes, the last word, whatever the last word was, would define how it was in the structure of research in the university. But, and there was no reason for it to be especially Regional. I insisted that it had to be Regional, because I said, "If you change it to California Oral History, or Oral History, or anything, we will never get another piece of mail. If it doesn't start with Regional, the mail will be lost forever."
- Chall: Like the phone was lost, the phone connections. But it had started out as a Regional Cultural History Project, so it had the word Regional in it from the beginning.
- Baum: Yes, and the Cultural was just because we didn't want to say Oral History.
- Chall: I see. So Regional, you fought for Regional from the very start, is that it? Or did--
- Baum: I didn't have anything to do with it from the very beginning, except—no, I know we talked about it when it first got a budget, way back in 1954, I guess. We said, Corinne and I decided it could not say Oral History, because we were—because as I told you, we were going to write and get in contact with so many people of which we knew that we couldn't possibly interview them all, and we didn't want people to be distressed, or feel they were left out. So we just asked them about their times, and did they have papers, and just—and

would they fill this out as to what their participation in whatever we were researching was, and we'd keep these records, see. And then the ones that sounded especially interesting we would talk to about an oral history.

Chall: So that's part of the origin of the word. And then the Office word came in in 1965.

Baum: Yes.

Chall: And I think then, by that time you were in Room 486 [fourth floor of the Doe Library Annex], is that right?

Baum: Yes, we were. I can remember meeting with—we were up there pretty quick; by 1960, we must have been up there.

Chall: Oh, yes, I think you were. And--

Baum: Up in our loft, which was very nice.

Chall: Yes, that one room.

Baum: We only had the one room, yes. And there was the—a professor that had the end room, and we glared at him every time because we wanted that end room so much, and David something [Wright]. He wasn't a very—he was a very commanding, not talkative, and looked hostile. Well, I got to know him later, he was the most friendly and creative—[laughs] And he moved around, he moved over to the other side of the upstairs, and I always wished I could take a course from him, because he was doing such interesting things.

Chall: Well, but yes, I think it was after I came in, in 1967; maybe a year or so later, we got that room. He had to move into other rooms as well.

Baum: Yes.

Chall: Well, by that time, the assistant director of the Bancroft Library at least was Robert Becker, and he was still under the aegis of, supervision of Donald Coney, so that's where your annual reports went. They went to Becker and then they went to Coney.

Baum: And they still did when I left. They always went to Dr. Hart, and then to the university librarian.

Chall: Oh, I see. So that was still the process.

Baum: The Bancroft is part of the library.

Chall: At the time we're talking about, 1965, you had a decrease of funds, so you were stuck at this \$15,000 level. And you wrote, I believe it was to Dean [William] Fretter, because he was the dean of the College of Letters and Science, and that's what you were—that's what the Regional Cultural History Project was now under. You had sent him a report about how hard it was just to have enough people, because they kept decreasing the budget, so you asked for an appropriation of \$27,749 for 1965, '66, and '67, so that you could have four FTEs, four--

Baum: FTE, full-time employee.

Chall: Yes. Now then, at that time, too, in 1963 [or 1964] when you were writing to Dean Fretter, you listed the completed interviews, and then you listed interviews which had been authorized by that faculty committee but which you hadn't had time to start. Let me give you the names of these people, because some of them you did start, did get started. The others for various reasons fell off.

There was the Crowley Tug & Barge Company. Now, you did get the Crowleys, and that was a couple of years later. The money came in for that. Why would the faculty committee have chosen Crowley Tug & Barge?

Baum: Well, the names that the faculty committee came up with didn't—some of them may have come out of their own minds, but most of them came out of our minds. And we presented a whole list, with why we thought this was a valuable interview. Then they could say yea or nay. And I can't remember why we picked Crowley. Oh, I know: Karl Kortum. Karl Kortum was, for some reason he and I were in touch often, and he thought Crowley would be a splendid—that he really knew all about the waterfront.

Chall: Yes, certainly a major business in the Bay Area.

Baum: Definitely, yes.

Chall: So you finally did get some money there, and you did it.

Baum: And I can't remember, in every interview that we did, we used to put down—well, it said in the interview, in the volume, but it also said in the catalogue usually, if it had outside funding, where the funding came from. And I don't know where Crowley came from off the top of my head.

Chall: Yes, we can look in the catalogue. [funded by an anonymous donor.] But let's see, so that's--

Baum: We were very serious about the fact that we wished to give researchers always all the clues that we could about how this interview went, and that's why we had the complex interview history that told how the interview went, and how

much editing was done, and all kinds of things. It also told where the funding came from, because we didn't want people to think that we'd gotten the money from the firm, which we often did, but we wanted them to know.

Chall: And that was set up really, I mean, you and Corinne had determined this when you first began to interview.

Baum: Yes, except for the money. We didn't get—and to start with, we never got money from anywhere, except from the university. And the only outside money we'd gotten from the university was the Russian émigrés.

Chall: Yes. Well, then you had Sam Hamburg, and I don't think you ever were able to get an interview with him, because I remember that Sam Hamburg file was in your files for years.

Baum: Yes. He finally died, and Mrs. Hamburg, who also died, Alice Hamburg, recently, she documented him, or—there was a biography written of him. There was a lot of agitation about Sam Hamburg, and I felt we succeeded, although we didn't do it.

Chall: Yes, that's right. Well, he was important even in some of the work that I had done with Dr. Lowdermilk; the name came up there.

Alexander Meiklejohn.

Baum: He died, that's why we didn't get him.

Chall: Yes. And why would he have been chosen? I know he was a very important person in this area.

Baum: I suppose because he was a very important person.

Chall: Yes. A liberal—I believe that he took a stand, maybe he was on loyalty oaths and things of this kind.

Thomas Church.

Baum: I can't remember why he was recommended.

Chall: But he was, what--

Baum: He was a landscape architect, a very famous one, and landscaped many of the homes and institutions around here. Who would have recommended him? I know we always had an architectural representative on the faculty committee.

Chall: Well, you had Michael Goodman.

- Baum: Yes. I don't think he recommended people. I don't think that was what he was in. He was [concerned with] how the office was set up. We did have T. J. Kent, but that doesn't sound like Thomas Church.
- Chall: Is the building that—one of the buildings on campus [both talking simultaneously] Yes Wurster Hall? Was that—oh, no, that was not designed--
- Baum: No, oh, no, [cross-talk] Thomas Church was a totally different than Wurster Hall. [laughs] We did do William Wurster.
- Chall: Yes. How about Geraldine Knight Scott?
- Baum: Oh, that's part of the landscape architecture, and she was a woman landscape architect. Even in those days—I think that's pre-feminist stuff—we were always trying to get women who were significant in some field.
- Chall: I see. But we never did interview her, I recall.
- Baum: Didn't we?
- Chall: We can look. We'll check that out, because the name doesn't--.
- Baum: Suzanne would have done it, Suzanne Riess. That's--
- Chall: Here's our first catalogue; I'll turn this off now. [tape interruption] Okay, we've got it on now. [pause] Was she interviewed?
- Baum: Yes, she was—oh, look at, a whole lot of people were interviewed regarding Thomas Church.
- Chall: I see, that was one of those types of interviews.
- Baum: Oh, if you turn that on, I want to tell you about that one, Thomas Church one. But let's see, that's way back, that was done in 1976.
- Chall: Well, that was later, you see. This is a list from 1964.
- Baum: I know, and I was very proud of our lists, because if the person—I said if the person lives long enough, we will get them.
- Chall: You were right. [laughter] That's why--
- Baum: And so I used to go through those old lists and look at the people that had been recommended, and maybe we did them twelve years later.
- Chall: That's correct. And that's why I'm going down this list with you very carefully, because you did miss a few, and we did get others.

- Baum: And Thomas Church couldn't speak. When we did the interview, he had some throat problem that he could not speak. So Suzanne did it, and we worked with, she worked with his wife, and with a lot of other people. There were two volumes of interviews. In one of them was Geraldine Knight Scott. And those interviews turned out very well, the kind where you did a lot of short interviews with somebody around someone.
- Chall: That was a focused interview.
- Baum: Yes. And it enabled us to do, to interview briefly, a lot of people that we would never have been able to do a whole interview, and yet we got a piece of their personality, under this--
- Chall: You did—that was one of many that you did like that. I think Julia Morgan was done the same way.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: And there were others that I believe that were done that way, and it worked out very well.
- Baum: Yes. Robert Gordon Sproul, that's the way we did Robert Gordon Sproul's finally, because he couldn't speak for himself.
- Chall: All right. Then how about H. Leland Vaughan? I don't even know who he is.
- Baum: I don't either. There seemed to be a number of landscape ones about that time. And as I say, we didn't get everybody.
- Chall: Well, here's one I think we did get eventually, William Penn Mott.
- Baum: Oh, that was—he was Oakland parks or--
- Chall: Oakland parks, and I have a feeling he may not have been in that—maybe we did him even after that catalogue was published.
- Baum: Oh, yes. I don't think we did him—or we did a little something—[cross talk]
- Chall: I think you got him into one of our government ones [the Ronald Reagan Gubernatorial Era project].
- Baum: Yes, that's right. And we worked and worked and worked on that. I mean, for years I dealt with different people in Oakland who wanted William Penn Mott interviewed, and I never could get the money put together and--
- Chall: Yes, it would be funding.

- Baum: Oh, and we finally got the money, and he died. Harlan Kessel put together money from Oakland Breakfast Club or something, and by then—it was when he was very ill and people were concerned that, Oh, gosh, we're not going to get this man, and they hustled it up, and it was too late.
- Chall: Too bad. He went from being one of the major rangers, as it were, with the East Bay Regional Park District. And then he went into, I don't remember whose, maybe he went into Jerry Brown's cabinet in one of the positions that dealt with the environment, or parks and recreation, or something like that. So he went from East Bay Regional Parks to a major place in the cabinet. I think it was Brown. [Mott was state director of Parks and Recreation under Governor Ronald Reagan and director of the National Park Service under President Reagan.] So we never did get him. But I remember the name was always on our list.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: Okay, then we have Winfield Scott Wellington.
- Baum: I don't think we got him. He was very prominent in the university in the early days, and he knew everybody. Jim Kantor kept telling me we've got to get him, and I said, "Jim, you go do the interview, I'll get it transcribed, but I—" and Jim wouldn't do it. Jim always said he wasn't—and he's probably right—he shouldn't have been an interviewer, because Jim Kantor knows everything, and he wouldn't let the guy talk, I'm sure.
- Chall: I see, so we didn't get him, whoever he is.
- Baum: But he was right, that he shouldn't be an interviewer, but he certainly was a wonderful advisor.
- Chall: Then finally we have Frank Bane, with Dr. James Leiby. That sounds as if Leiby was going to do the interview.
- Baum: Yes, and he did. It was a long interview, and Jim Leiby became a major advisor for us too, advisor I mean, not necessarily an official advisor--
- Chall: I remember he was often consulted when we were--
- Baum: Yes, he was working on a history of social welfare of California.
- Chall: That was it, yes.
- Baum: And he did [reading from catalogue] "interviewed in 1965 by James R. W. Leiby, professor of social welfare." And it's 294 pages, so it was a very long and good interview.

- Chall: And what was the date of that one?
- Baum: Well, he was interviewed in 1965.
- Chall: I see. Well, then, that was right away.
- Baum: So it might have been that Jim Leiby—well, I'm sure he would have been advising us then, and that the names that are on your list probably came partly from him.
- Chall: Yes. Well, that was your list of interviews, all authorized by the faculty committee and "ready to start when time permits." When time permits. And you also, in that same letter, listed interviews in continuing series, so that you must have either started them or planned to have a series. One of them, of course, was California politics, centering around the governorship of Earl Warren. Well, this is 1964; you finally got the money I think it was in about 1969. I'll have to check that out, but it was a bit later. Then you had conservation and forestry, but there were many already in process, but that was probably your first, the earliest for conservation, with money from the outside.
- [Reading] "Water and land resources, with a special emphasis on electric and gas power". You wanted to get James Black, PG&E--
- Baum: Oh, PG&E, yes.
- Chall: --James Pollard, Coast Electric; Louis Edmonds and Harry Lloyd were water engineering. Charles Kaupke, water master of the King's Ranch. You did get Kaupke, didn't you, eventually?
- Baum: No. I don't think we got any of those people.
- Chall: And Dewey Anderson, rancher. So yes, I remember when I was going through files that Kaupke's name came up. We had a lot of material in files on electrical power. But I don't think we ever did any interviewing on it, did we?
- Baum: I don't think we ever did any. Sometimes we felt there was opposition from PG&E, but I'm not sure of that.
- Chall: Let me check this. [tape interruption] Well, that was your 1964 report, letter. In 1965, just a few years later, I got a lot of information out of *CU News* [library staff newsletter]. You used that as the way to publicize what we were doing. [According to *CU News*] in May, 1965, Resources for the Future [RFF] gave us a grant to record the U.S. Forest Service covering the period 1905 to 1955. You had apparently—there was an earlier series of interviews on the history of national parks, and Amelia Fry, that was Chita, was doing it under

the supervision of Professor Henry Vaux, dean of the School of Forestry. I think your earliest grants really must have come out of RFF.

Baum: Yes, the first grant. And I think I told you, we had a little money before that, an assignment sort of, from the Forest History Society, which at that time was in Minneapolis or St. Paul, one of--. And so they had asked us to do some western forestry people.

Chall: That was a good start, because they were the basis on which we did a lot of interviews on forestry.

Baum: Oh, yes.

Chall: Chita was busy for years on that, the forest history.

Baum: And when I first came into ROHO, or Regional Cultural History Project, I think already in the Bancroft Library there may have been a couple of interviews done by the Forest History Society. Elwood Maunder was the director, and he did the interviews. And they were with foresters—not the administrative staff, but the guys who went out and chopped trees. They were very charming. And they were just rough transcripts, sort of, but part of their commitment in the Forest History Society was to be sure that the interviews were deposited in the areas where this forestry had taken place, so that local historians could use it. So the Bancroft Library was one of the western depositories. So that's why I think Forest History Society in a very small way had begun doing oral history as soon as ROHO, maybe, and as soon as Columbia, yes.

Chall: Yes. And then Resources for the Future was—I guess every now and then you still see the name, Resources for the Future. What was it, an archive or--?

Baum: I think it was sort of like a think tank or library in Washington, DC.

Chall: Yes, I think that's right.

Baum: And for some reason, Chita knew the head of it.

Chall: Oh. Well, they were interested, weren't they, in the environment, in forestry--

Baum: Oh, yes, yes.

Chall: So this would be a good connection--

Baum: Oh, it would have been right up their alley.

Chall: Could she have met him through Woody [Maunder]?

Baum: I don't know. I don't think so. But she knew the head of it, and that's the way some of the best projects get going, is when you just don't write up these big grant proposals but just talk about what's a good thing to do, and work it out how it ought to be done.

[End tape 3, side A; begin side B]

Baum: I think it picks us up pretty well.

Chall: This is an excellent mike. All right. In 1965, we're going a little bit farther—you know, you were doing so much that you had an annual report in the form of a catalogue. I saw it [in ROHO archives]⁷, it was like the catalogue, only it was in just ordinary printing paper. I don't know how you got it out, but it was probably Xerox about that time. But it was all typewritten like this, just an ordinary type. You listed interviews that were completed or in process: agriculture and water power, thirteen; conservation and forestry, thirty-three; science and medicine, seven; business and labor, eight; art, photography, and architecture—you always combined those three—twelve; accounting, five; social welfare, education, and civic betterment, eleven; among them Lawrence and Flora Arnstein. And university history, there were twenty-three; literature, publishing, and printing, eighteen; law, six; politics, sixteen; Russian émigrés, four; and special, there were five. Among these five were Leon Bocqueraz on the Drake Plate.

Baum: Bocqueraz! [corrects pronunciation] Leon Bocqueraz. Oh, that is a funny story. [laughs]

Chall: Okay, well, tell it.

Baum: The Bancroft Library possessed the great plate, and that was the plate that supposedly had been buried by Sir Francis Drake when he came into San Francisco Bay. It had later been found. It was now a prime exhibit of the Bancroft Library. Well, the man who found it was a chauffeur of, I think, the president or head of the Bank of America, who was Leon Bocqueraz. So the chauffeur had died, but Mr. Bocqueraz was still alive. So I was assigned to go and interview him—did he remember when his chauffeur found it? And he did. I went to his beautiful home in Oakland, all of which has been, is now a freeway. I mean, it's hard to believe how beautiful his home and grounds was, and that it's totally gone. That's beside the point.

But anyway, we got a very short interview, I think maybe it was seventeen pages or something, and that was really pulling.

⁷ *CU News*, 12/30/65, notes that ROHO finished a catalogue of annotated listings of 133 interviews completed or in process since its inception in 1954.

- Chall: That was really focused, eh?
- Baum: And it didn't tell anything about Mr. Bocqueraz. He'd gone out hunting somewhere, his chauffeur had driven him out, somewhere out by Pt. Reyes, and while he was out looking for ducks or whatever he was doing, his chauffeur stayed around the car, and his chauffeur—this is as Mr. Bocqueraz tells it—found the plate somewhere in the ground, and put it in the back of the car, just in the trunk. He did tell Mr. Bocqueraz that he'd found this thing, maybe they looked at it, and then they just threw it back there. It wasn't anything.
- And later, the story is that the chauffeur—but Mr. Bocqueraz couldn't swear to this, because he wasn't there then—the chauffeur just was cleaning out the car, and he threw it out by San Quentin sometime, some hills out there. And he just threw it out, and later, it was found near San Quentin. So this is the story of how it got from Drake's Point to—. Well, that little interview, as soon as people knew we had it—immediately, a copy was ordered from England somewhere, wherever Sir Francis Drake had sailed from, and it was around the world. It was my little interview, and it was [laughs] an example of how not to do an oral history, I think. I thought it was so funny that it got there. Of course, it all turned out later it [Drake's plate] was a fake.
- Chall: Isn't that an incredible story!
- Baum: And so I don't know how Mr. Bocqueraz—what did the chauffeur find? [laughs] I hope wherever that interview is that they amend it to add that it was later found to be a fake. Well, they know where—I know, they know where, who did it and everything.
- Chall: Do they know who did it? I think they didn't at the time that—I remember they found it by metallurgical checks and things like that, that they can do now.
- Baum: There was an article in the California Historical Society's journal about how it was done and all. I'd have to find that.
- Chall: I thought that at the time, nobody knew who had done it.
- Baum: Oh, nobody knew. Well, somebody knew, but--
- Chall: But it was never divulged. I think Ruth Teiser used to have her own—everybody had a feeling that it was, their own suspicions of different people who might have--
- Baum: I think they were people from the [pause], oh, I forget the name of that group. It was a rowdy group of rich historians.

- Chall: Oh, really? Well, somebody did a good job. It's one of the great frauds of the Bay Area.
- Baum: It was a funny story, yes.
- Chall: Ah, well, when I read all these numbers to you, eventually it was a rough count of about 150, I think. So that's 1965. You were really on the road there. Regardless of the fact that you were given--
- Baum: That we didn't have much money, yes. But you did also put into the list how much we were paid.
- Chall: Yes, I have this [letter of yours to Dean Fretter, of December 15,] 1964, which shows probably what you were getting paid in 1964, the head of the office was getting \$4.34; the interviewers were getting \$3.57; the transcribers were getting \$2.24; the average hourly wage was \$3.41, and so your staff hours weren't even enough at that time for two full-time equivalents. So you really were doing this on very little money.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: In that annual report, too [1963-1964], there was discussion of budgeting. I think then, too, you were requesting that there be advice from the Bancroft Library, or a committee, or a professor. You were at that point building some basic publicity concepts, which of course you did.
- Baum: And for the publicity, which we were always concerned about, our concern was that people would find the interviews, and that they would be purchased or gotten somehow into libraries around the United States, so that researchers could use them.
- Chall: I think that it was a year or so later when you really put that into something more concrete. I think I have this on another annual report.
- In 1966—we can go on here chronologically—the Forest History Society gave you a grant of \$500 to do the history of forest genetics.
- Baum: \$500?
- Chall: Yes. You also put in a grant application, Harriet Nathan did this, for a community service project. It never materialized.
- Baum: Again, I forget that.
- Chall: Oh, Harriet Nathan had been hired, let me see. [In your 1965-1966 annual report], you have the dates when people were hired. She came in 1966, and right away she was applying for a grant.

- Baum: Yes. Harriet Nathan was a housewife that had raised her children. I think she was one of my many presidents of the League of Women Voters. And then she went to journalism school at Cal and got a master's, I think. She was—let's see, she was working for the Institute of Public Relations—no, maybe not--
- Chall: IGS, Institute of Governmental Studies.
- Baum: Institute of Governmental Studies, yes. So she was a very part-time. She had been graduated from Cal quite a long time ago. She was always very active in university events, and she was very knowledgeable, and so I was lucky to have been able to get her. And the reason—she used to be my neighbor. When I first moved into Berkeley and I was having my children and she was having her children, we were next door. I hardly ever saw her, because I think she was—well, because I was always at work, and she was doing something, I don't know what.
- Chall: She was active in the community.
- Baum: Yes, that's right, she was very active in the community. And later, I used to see her on campus, and I would wave at her and say, "What are you doing?" and she'd say she was going to journalism school.
- Chall: She started later.
- Baum: Yes. So then we talked about maybe she could work for us sometime, so it was sort of one of those meet in the hall for ten years, and then finally she was ready.
- Chall: And she actually worked for both of us—I mean, both IGS and ROHO.
- Baum: Yes. But she worked for IGS four days a week and for us one day. She wrote several books while she was doing that.
- Chall: So it sort of would fit that she would think about a community service project.
- Baum: Oh, yes, and her husband was a--
- Chall: Oh, yes. He was even executive director of a foundation or--
- Baum: No, not then. He was out in Contra Costa; he was in charge of a lot of the social work in Contra Costa County.
- Chall: That's right, he was a social worker.
- Baum: So not only was she active in League of Women Voters-type things, but her husband certainly was.

- Chall: Yes. And that same year that Harriet Nathan came in, so did Joann Ariff.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: That was 1966.
- Baum: She was art.
- Chall: In your annual report, 1965-1966, you had the catalogue. It was a finished catalogue of annotated listings of 133 tape-recorded interviews, completed or in process, since the inception in 1954. That's taken from a quote from *CU News* on December 30, 1965. But in your annual report, you noted that two new part-time interviewers were added, and trained in interview process: Harriet Nathan and Joann Ariff. It's interesting, "trained in interview process." How did you train in those days?
- Baum: I don't know. [laughs] I can't remember that, Malca. Mostly we did as we did with you: we threw you out in the water and said, "Swim." [laughs]
- Chall: That's right. I just thought this was sort of interesting that this would have been written in your annual report. I thought, well, maybe something was going on in 1966 that--. Then you also reported that you had five part-time transcribers and typists, trained to replace employees leaving. I don't know how they were trained either. Two transcriber-typists were still employed. You indicated that papers were brought in. That must mean into the Bancroft Library, which is interesting. These were from J. Edward Johnson. He had stenographic notes of interviews with associates of all California Supreme Court justices. Then there was a series of interviews with Mrs. Bracelin, supplementing the exploration of Latin America, of—let's see. Exploration?
- Baum: Plants.
- Chall: I think something to do with plants. And these—this was arranged by Annette Carter of UC Herbarium. She volunteered to work with Mrs. Bracelin on the recording and arrangement of papers.
- Baum: [searching through the catalogues] ...find her... Hmm.
- Chall: That was in your annual report.
- Baum: Yes, and I--
- Chall: In 1965-66.
- Baum: How do you spell Carter? I should have her listed.
- Chall: [spells]

- Baum: Just plain old Carter. Bracelin was the lady on the--. She was a famous plant collector, and her stuff is all in the UC Herbarium. Oh. Well, I don't—somehow Annette Carter was missed, didn't get listed.
- Chall: Those are papers, so that they--
- Baum: Well, but she did interviews.
- Chall: Oh, did she?
- Baum: She brought in those interviews.
- Chall: Oh, yes, there was a series of interviews, that's right, with Mrs. Bracelin.
- Let's see. You listed the fact that got an alumni grant. You received money from the Water Resources Center for interviews on water, and Water Resources Center and Archives, and we discussed that. And then you also got money from RFF, [Resources for the Future.] \$4,200 for interviews documenting the history of forestry and the U.S. Forest Service. Those interviews mostly conducted in Washington, DC, by a former Berkeley woman. Who would that have been?
- Baum: It might have been Edith Mezirow.
- Chall: Well, it might have been. Although you had another person—Thelma Dreis?
- Baum: Yes, Thelma Dreis.
- Chall: Now, I don't have her listed here until 1968. But she's the only other person I could think of.
- Baum: Yes. Thelma Dreis, let's see what she interviewed on. Yes, I remember her. Did it say she was a former Berkeley person?
- Chall: It doesn't say anything here in your annual report, it just says the Forest Service interviews were mostly conducted in Washington, DC, by a former Berkeley woman. By a former Berkeley woman. And I don't know who that was, because it wasn't Chita, this was 1965-1966.
- Baum: No, no. '61, let's see. [looking through papers] I think Thelma Dreis finished—oh, yes, here. Okay, we had a very long interview started by Amelia Fry, and it's listed in the catalogue as interviewed 1965 to 1966.
- Chall: That would be it.

- Baum: But, I believe this ran on for longer than that, because it had other persons listed. Edith Mezirow, Fern Ingersoll, and Thelma Dreis. [Arthur Ringland oral history]
- Chall: Well, Fern Ingersoll never lived in Berkeley.
- Baum: No. Edith Mezirow did.
- Chall: Yes, so it might have been Edith Mezirow. Because I think she was living in the East, and then she moved out here, and then she--
- Baum: She returned to the East, and she did my International House people.
- Chall: Yes, International House, mm-hmm. Well, it might have been....
- Baum: Chita was going back to Washington fairly often working with the suffragist women, lobbying in Congress.
- Chall: I think that was too early that Chita would be doing that.
- Baum: Was it, maybe. Yes, we went into a bunch of—oh, dear.
- Chall: There was the money, \$4,200 from RFF, for interviews documenting the history of forestry and the U.S. Forest Service. And then also, there was the Forest History Society, which gave you \$2,000 during that year for selected prominent figures in forest history in California and the Northwest. And then you had included a list of ongoing interviews. I didn't take down all that. But obviously, your money, \$4,200 and another \$2,000, that was very important money for you in 1965-66.
- Baum: Mm-hmm. Those were important interviews.
- Chall: Yes.
- Baum: Great collection, underwritten by the Forest History Society and Resources for the Future. And Chita did all those, and Chita became very, very knowledgeable in forest history, probably more than anybody, because--
- Chall: [laughing] Aside from those folks!
- Baum: Well, because she knew all kinds of people. It was a wonderful project, I mean, just marvelous.
- Chall: And I think it will always have value, always--.
- Baum: I think it all grew, Chita's interest in forestry, which was nothing she was ever interested in originally, was through meeting Newton Drury. And from him,

and Horace Albright, so that—I forget what they call these things, when you go from one recommendation to another, there’s a system that anthropologists talk about. And this was the Newton Drury collection of—yes, and Newton Drury did a lot of interviews also. [laughs] And the reason she knew—this is all out of--

Chall: No, it isn’t, it’s all--

Baum: --sync, but the reason Chita knew Newton Drury, she had been assigned, when she first came in, she was working on the university history, the history of the University of California, and one of the men she interviewed was an engineer for the university. So she finished that interview—I should add that name, but I don’t remember it right now [Herbert Foster, interviewed 1960]—he said, “You really ought to talk to my neighbor.”

Chall: Oh, really!

Baum: And so he took Chita over to the house next door, to meet Newton Drury. And from that brief meeting came everything that we did with national parks, and forestry, and even through Newton Drury we met Earl Warren.

Chall: Oh, yes, that’s right, they were good friends.

Baum: [laughs] Oh! So just step by step.

Chall: Step by step. In your monthly logs of 1966, in May, you were interviewing typist applicants, and you were discussing an experimental videotape interview, which I think finally came off. That was a long time ago, 1966. And then you were concerned with tape recorder repairs and budget problems. Now, this is just your monthly log, which at that time was on a half sheet of blue paper. It got longer—it was usually in whole sheets after a while. In September—this was also on blue paper—this was a monthly log—this is important—you attended the first Oral History Colloquium, it was September 25-28. Baum, Teiser, Harroun, and Fry all went together. Jim Monk was the chairman--

Baum: Jim [James] Mink. Of UCLA.

Chall: Was he elected the chairman at the colloquium? Were you just organizing at that time?

Baum: Yes, I think so. But Elizabeth--

Chall: Elizabeth Dixon--

Baum: Jim Mink was, I think, the archivist for UCLA, but he had somehow gotten this little oral history program into his bailiwick, and Elizabeth Dixon was the

lady he had in charge of the office, and they were busy entrepreneurs. Elizabeth Dixon put together this meeting up in Arrowhead, Lake Arrowhead.

Chall: Yes, Arrowhead Lodge.

Baum: Oh, it was exciting.

Chall: So tell me about that. It really was the beginning of a major work.

Baum: Yes. And oh, I have to credit Jim Mink and Elizabeth Dixon, and there was another fellow [murmuring cross-talk] Jim Mink was always starting things. He started the Society of California Archivists, and he was a really go-getter type. They somehow got a list, put together a list of all the oral histories they'd ever—oral history offices. And they were not necessarily offices, but everybody had heard of Columbia University. Columbia University, who had a list somehow of people who'd written to them for advice or whatever, and so Jim sent out an invitation, and a lot of people came. And it was really fun, I mean, it was amazing. Most of them were not offices. They were projects. A project had been set up to document somebody—secretary of state was one--

Chall: So they were, maybe they were local history projects too.

Baum: No.

Chall: Most of these were offices in, what, governmental offices, or university—were these all attached mostly to universities, colleges?

Baum: Yes, they were mostly scholarly, scholarly. And they might have some thousands of dollars to collect the papers of a famous person, and to get oral histories about him. Now, one of those little agencies was the John F. Kennedy project, and was that after--

Chall: Yes.

Baum: And the person who came from there was Charles Morrissey. And that project, Charles Morrissey had come from Cal—I didn't know him then—he was working on his Ph.D., and he had been hired by the [President Harry S] Truman Library, which had set up an oral history program, to go to Washington, DC, and interview persons who knew Truman in Washington. Because there was an office in—where is it?

Chall: Independence?

Baum: Independence, the Truman Library. And Charlie was in Washington, I believe, doing these others. Oh, and there was the nicest guy who was in charge of the Truman Library, Phil-- [Philip Brooks] These things we need to fill in, because there's absolutely no reason except my old age to not—[laughs]

- Chall: Well, you haven't had to think of them for a long time.
- Baum: No. Anyhow, so Charlie had been asked, when John F. Kennedy was assassinated. They immediately set up an oral history program in some agency, and Charlie was put in charge, because nobody knew anything about oral history. And Charlie—he knew about oral history because he'd been going around Washington interviewing people about Truman. So he was put in charge, and that became a very big project. And Charlie gave—he had had some adventures in this interviewing, it was a very hot topic, because it was at that time—they didn't know what would happen to the Democratic party, which wings would take over. And everybody wanted to know what everybody else had said. Charlie's job was not only to interview but to protect the interviews, because they were supposed to be confidential. They were confidential, they were still in process, and he gave us the most wonderful speech about what he found out about how to interview and so on. But also, of the necessity of protecting your [interviewees].
- [End audiofile 8; begin audiofile 9 (tape 4, side A)]
- Chall: --must have been exciting. Now, this was the beginning of a national organization?
- Baum: Yes. Yes, they decided to—I think Jim Mink was the chairman or whatever--
- Chall: Yes, he was the chairman.
- Baum: I mean for the next year, and it was going to be held at Columbia in--
- Chall: Oh, let's see, that would have been 1967, then, because this was '66.
- Baum: Yes. Because I think '67 was the first official—and in the meantime, old Louie Starr from Columbia University and Elizabeth Mason, his chief of staff, in the meantime they got the Oral History Association, what—legalized, what I mean.
- Chall: Incorporated?
- Baum: Incorporated, incorporated, yes. They did a lot of things. Oh, but back to the, back to going down there [to the Arrowhead colloquium.] We went down, and Ruth, Ruth Teiser, and Catherine Harroun, they were our wine interviewers, or maybe they were still our book interviewers.
- Chall: Book, mostly, yes.
- Baum: Maybe we hadn't done any wine yet. But they were always doing wine, I think they were writers who documented, and one of the subjects they wrote about was wine. [here, and throughout: Chall murmuring, agreeing, repeating

underneath Baum's speech.] Books were the main thing they wrote about, fine printing.

- Chall: Fine printing, and they were your interviewers on some major fine printing--
- Baum: But anyway, so they—and we took down our videotape, that first videotape.
- Chall: Oh, the first videotape was--
- Baum: Schofield [William].
- Chall: And what was that on? Was that forest history or what?
- Baum: Let's see. I can remember that so clearly, and it was one of Chita's interviews, William Schofield, William Schofield. [pause while looking in Catalogue I] The title of his oral history was *Forestry, Lobbying, and Resource Legislation*. But primarily he was a lobbyist. He was a very good speaker. Let's see. He was interviewed in 1966.
- Chall: Yes, that was—this was a big year, 1965-66. And that was your first video. Was Chita interviewing him on tape?
- Baum: Oh, yes, and I don't know why we selected him for videotaping. It was done in the—the university had an office that did videotaping and primarily showed things for student classes, for professors and so on. But they had equipment, and they took Mr. Schofield and Chita into this little studio, interviewing studio. Well, Mr. Schofield was so dramatic. He told all about lobbying, the things that nobody would ever say. I mean, he was just candid as anything.
- Chall: And he allowed this to be used?
- Baum: Yes. And I had already taken that videotape previously to a meeting of the Western American History Association, something like that--
- Chall: Yes, you, in 1966, December, had participated in the sixth conference of the Western History Association in El Paso.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: And your topic was Oral History: A Revived Tradition at the Bancroft Library. And so you took it there?
- Baum: I'd taken the video, and I showed the video, and it was it was very popular, yes, it was a thrilling--. We never did many more videos, but we did show that in our cabin. We weren't on the program—I'm getting back now to the first [Oral History Association Conference]. We had--

- Chall: --cabin that had electricity in it.
- Baum: Oh, yes. Yes. And Ruth and Catherine had brought wine, and cheese, so we said we would have wine and cheese over at ROHO's cabin, and then we showed our videotape--
- Chall: Oh, it must have been a smashing success.
- Baum: It was a smashing success, yes. What I was going to say was that there were a lot of people in the oral history, in the conference, there were a lot of medical people, and some of them were psychiatrists. It was like psychiatrists do interviews, and somehow they were interested. Well, now, I think in future meetings, they wrote us off, or anyway, it ceased to be medical-dominated. But at that time, the place was crawling with doctors, and one fellow was from Florida. He was a dermatologist. He had been interviewing a lot of old dermatologists, and he was a fanatic, practically, on good tape recording, a technician. He insisted that it was more important to him that the thing was well technically recorded than whatever it said. [laughter]
- Chall: One of those.
- Baum: And he eventually dropped out of the Oral History Association a couple of years, because he thought we were all sloppy.
- Chall: Oh, I see.
- Baum: But he was a kind of leader. A couple of historical societies too would send a man, or woman, but there were more men than women. Well, let's see, what else can I say about that. I think that maybe Chita got elected, or maybe she didn't.
- Chall: Eventually, I think both of you had offices--
- Baum: Oh, I know, I got nominated for the council, and I did get elected. And Chita and I did a lot of work on that, on the Oral History Association, especially Chita, over the years. Following Dr. Hart's manifestos, we did not work on professional societies on company time. We couldn't—so if you had to do anything like, we were working on the constitution, the constitution for the governing—anything like that, we had to check out, take out the time. If we did it in the office, we made sure not to put that on the time clock. So we were never as eager to be participatory in any of those things as other groups, where working on the professional organization was part of their assignment.
- Chall: Yes, I see. I remember you told me years ago that's why you couldn't take major offices.

- Baum: That's right, yes. Because once I was—they would have nominated me for president, I said, "No, I have to work." [laughs] "If I put all the time on being the president of the OHA, my family would starve."
- Chall: That's right, yes. You eventually got funds to go to the colloquia, the annual meetings, but that came much later, when they would give you any money.
- Baum: Not almost in all the time I was there, we always paid our own way.
- Chall: Oh. I thought sometimes you would get--
- Baum: Eventually, way, way much later, Dr. Hart—everybody else in Bancroft Library went to their professional meetings on Bancroft money, and so finally Dr. Hart said that we could spend a smallish amount of money to go, and we never sent like one person fully and the other persons could pay their own way. Other people want to go—whatever amount of money we got that could go to the colloquium was divided up equally among whoever wanted to go.
- Chall: I'm hoping that maybe Gaby will talk to you about the whole development of the OHA, so I'm not going any further past the beginning.
- Baum: I sort of remember that I—'66, my son Noah was born in January of '66, and so that was probably the first time I'd left home. I mean, a lot of my life is divided out by which child was being the baby.
- Chall: Noah was born in '66, and how many days did you take off after his birth?
- Baum: Oh, I don't remember, Malca, not very many. [laughter] Not very many. I was close enough that I could get home at lunch. [laughs]
- Chall: What would you do, go home and--
- Baum: I was nursing, yes, and that was the good thing about my job, was that--
- Chall: And fortunately, you had good help in the house.
- Baum: I had good help.
- Chall: It wasn't Shirley then, was it?
- Baum: No, it wasn't, it was another wonderful lady. No, wait, let's see. Don't answer that. I think--
- Chall: Yes, but you always had somebody that you could trust in the house, because by this time, you had--
- Baum: Well, Noah was the fifth.

- Chall: So there were the other children.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: They were in school, mostly.
- Baum: But the hard part is when you're nursing and your baby is not there. [laughs] You're in great agony.
- Chall: Right. Well, in other monthly logs, in October '66, you reported that Chita reported eight hours raising funds for RFF, forty hours editing RFF, and the rest of the time on forest history. So this is the first time that you started breaking it down, or at least indicating [time expended on projects] in the monthly log. And in December, you reported that most of the interviews were either university history or forest history.
- Baum: University history. Because Ruth and Catherine must have been doing books.
- Chall: Oh, yes. Also, I noted that in 1965 and '66, [shuffling papers]—that's not the page I want...you got a lot of publicity. The *Chronicle* in 1965 in October, there was an article on the fine printer project, about printers, book sellers, publishers, and writers. That was in the *Chronicle*. And that was in, let's see, October. Then December 30th in *CU News*, you reported that ROHO finished a catalogue, that's that catalogue we talked about, listing 133 tape-recorded interviews completed or in process since the inception. So you were I think beginning to get out a lot, especially, after '66, '67 probably.
- Baum: Yes, well.
- Chall: Then, I guess we talked about your participating in the conference of the Western History Association. Then we come to 1967, let's see. [papers, pause] In 1967, Lois Stone, I think that she had already been on the staff, but--
- Baum: I think she only did one interview--
- Chall: Lois Stone, 1967. She became editor II, June 5. And in—that was from *CU News* [July 13, 1967], and also, in 1967, you spoke at a conference of California Historical Societies, "Oral History and the Historical Societies." Did you give a sort of standard speech that you tweaked a bit for each organization, or did you start from scratch? Because you began to do a lot of speaking.
- Baum: Mm-hmm. I'm sure I'd use an old one if it was possible, but that it would take a lot of tweaking. But before that, there was—one of the first things I did was, I went down, not Stanford, but a small, a community college near there, and I gave a talk to their little historical society on how to do oral history. Here we

are, here's my picture, the San Mateo County Historical Association, this is 1967.

Chall: Aha. And that, yes, I do have that, California Historical Society, "Oral History and the Historical Society."

Baum: And that, I worked a long time on that speech. Then other societies began to ask me to come and talk to them, and finally I thought, This is getting into too much time--

Chall: But out of that, did that come your book?

Baum: Yes. So finally, I put it down as, I made it into a little booklet.

Chall: Yes, and I do have a date when that was published, and it's well past, about 1968 or '9, I think, in that time. I'll get it eventually.

Baum: Conference of California Historical Societies, what did they do? They published it. And after, I guess, I had spoken at a place for them, and at that meeting, which was in San Diego, and I can't remember the date, the conference of California Historical Societies, I think they had just published my book. And who came? Gee, what a terrible memory. Someone was there, oh, yes, oh, I remember him now. American Association for State and Local History, the director was there. He saw that and said, Could AASLH publish it, and so we negotiated around, and then it came out as a—first it was a little thing—same size always--

Chall: It was a little pamphlet, but it was a best-seller.

Baum: Yes. It was a best-seller. It's still selling. But they've done a lot more, and of course, all the things that I've advised them about, tape recorders and this and that, is not—[laughter]

Chall: It's all changed. But at least the basic knowledge about knowing how to interview and being sure you have a legal agreement and all the rest, that still holds.

Baum: Yes.

Chall: Well, Lois Stone came in—she didn't stay very long, I think, I don't really know. But was she doing botany?

Baum: Yes.

Chall: She was hired for a special reason, wasn't she? Wasn't she writing articles or a book--?

Baum: She was writing a book--

Chall: She was using the Bancroft Library.

Baum: She was in the Bancroft all the time. She was a real specialist in botany, and, well, I'll tell you what she did. [looking through papers and Catalogue I] I had a hard time dealing with her sometimes. [laughs] Because she wasn't a regular interviewer, you know. She just did—oh, let's see, it [catalogue] says the Martinis, *Wine Making In The Napa Valley*. Well, that one she edited later. Lois Stone, let's see, which one did she do. I keep thinking it's a bird man, but—. Loye Miller, who was called The Interpretive Naturalist, interviewed 1967 and 1969 by Lois Stone. And it doesn't—wait a minute. Oh, and a lot of other people interviewed him, too. I mean, he was a quite famous person, and we were lucky to do it, and it doesn't say who funded it. That's funny, because he was not one of our regular lists. I don't know how we—oh, yes, Lois also did the Eddy Tree Breeding Station, Institute of Forest Genetics. And she did the interviews in 1967 and 1968, and that was underwritten by the Forest History Society. I'm sure the reason it was, that they funded it, is that I stood there and cried that I have this wonderful interview and I can't finish it because I don't have any money, and that that's how we got it. And that's been very useful too. That's all Lois did.

And she was working on this book, which has come out, of somebody who did, painted birds. Famous--.

Chall: Yes, it would have been. All right. We're going to move into '67 and do monthly logs and annual report, because things were really moving ahead. And this is even before Dr. Hart came in.

Baum: I forget the date when he came in.

Chall: 1970. January 1.

Baum: 1970. Yes, we were sort of dangling then.

Chall: But you certainly did a good job of it.

Baum: Bob Becker was the main person we talked to.*

Chall: Did he help? I mean, you were out there really shaking the trees for money. But look at all the interviews that had come in. This annual report of 1965-66—133 tape-recorded interviews, either finished or in process since '54.

* 1965, Robert Becker was appointed assistant director of TBL. 1967, James Skipper replaces Donald Coney as UC Librarian. 1970, James Hart appointed director of TBL.

Now, in 1967, according to the monthly log here, you hired Malca Chall to interview Walter Lowdermilk, and as I recall, you had something like \$8,000, was it?

Baum: Where did it come from? I can't remember that.

Chall: I don't know where it came from, and I'm just guessing at the \$8,000. But I think that--. [Albert] Lepawsky, Dr. Lepawsky had been the one who had told you about Dr. Lowdermilk, that's because they lived next door to each other. Is his name Alfred or Albert, I can't—Albert, I think. So you had this money, and you didn't have an interviewer. And Walter Lowdermilk was renowned as a conservationist.

Baum: [looking at Catalogue I] Here it says it was underwritten by the Statewide Water Resources Center, and the Departments of Soil Sciences, Geography, and Forestry, UC Berkeley; University of Wyoming Western History Center; the Judah [L.] Magnes Memorial Museum; and colleagues of Walter C. Lowdermilk.

Chall: Well, that doesn't tell it, because we had to go out, all those names that you just listed--

Baum: There was--

Chall: We went out and shook the--

Baum: Little chips of money that came in to finish it because----

Chall: --you took me by the hand and led me all these places, and/or said write letters. Some of them you already knew. But I don't know where the first money came from.*

Baum: So I don't know where the original money--

Chall: I don't know either. Maybe you just assumed that you would get it.

Baum: No, I don't--

Chall: If Dr. Lepawsky--

Baum: Oh, well, maybe Dr. Lepawsky, I think he was maybe one of our advisors.

* In a letter dated January 30, 1967 to Chall, regarding hiring her to interview Walter Lowdermilk, Willa Baum writes she has \$1,000 to do the interview.

- Chall: Well, he might have been, because—I mean, he knew you obviously from something, although I don't have his name anywhere--
- Baum: Yes, I can remember that he--
- Chall: --but I know that, because the day that I was—Well, it took a while to hire me, because you had to go through the bureaucracy, but the first day that I came in, Dr. Lepawsky took me to lunch, and he told me about Dr. Lowdermilk and his wife, and about their children, what he knew about them. So that was it. As you say, you threw the baby into the bathwater.
- Baum: And that was probably one of the harder interviews we've ever done. [laughs]
- Chall: It was at that time, I think. I believe that I had \$8,000. In a moment we'll go into the money that you said you could do an oral history with at that time. You told me to go to *Who's Who* and read about Dr. Lowdermilk, and sort of set up an outline, and I could probably do his life in eight interviews, because that's about the way it was set up. We could do a full-length memoir actually. According to a breakdown of estimated costs for an oral history memoir series, the average cost of a completed memoir series was \$10,000. That's in your 1966 scrapbook I found this.*
- Baum: A series or an interview?
- Chall: It says memoir series. And this was seven to eight major, full-length memoirs, several short subject areas--
- Baum: \$10,000!
- Chall: --supplementing the interviews. A full-length memoir would be \$1,000, and seven to eight recorded interview sessions of one and a half hours each. And then it goes on to say how much time it takes to transcribe and final type and all that, which didn't ever change a great deal.
- So I don't remember how much I could start with, but whatever it was, you told me that I could do it in eight hours, and it would take care of the funds that we had. And this is, I think, an example of how you could deal with problems, because you certainly dealt with this one. Mrs. Lowdermilk, when I met them, said, "You could never do Walter's life in eight hours." Just can't do it. I came back and told you that. Mrs. Lowdermilk had a scheme ultimately, and you accepted this scheme. She would write a chapter—I set it up chronologically—she would write a chapter on that particular part of his

* Willa Baum's scrapbook contains letters, press releases, memos, and other material she thought important for each year. The year 1966 contains the breakdown of costs of an oral history interview, to assist granting agencies considering funding ROHO projects.

life, career, and I would interview him based on what I wanted to get from him, which may not have been what she was writing. And, then I would edit both what she had written—hers came off on a typewriter, and his came on the recorder, it was a transcript. Then I would edit them both together, and we would chapter it in such a way that it was the written report and the oral report. That came a little bit later.

But you said, “Okay, Mrs. Lowdermilk, you can go ahead and do this.” That’s exactly how we did it. And I don’t remember how many interviews I did with Dr. Lowdermilk. Once a week primarily, I think it was an hour and a half to two hours. It was on the five-inch reels. We went into his little study and closed the door and Mrs. Lowdermilk was in the dining room. You remember that large dining room table she had. Everything was cleared away, and she sat with the papers and the typewriter on one end, and she clicked away. She was an amazing woman.

Baum: I think, Malca, as I remember it, the first time we started, you started, you interviewed him—maybe she was there. Was she there?

Chall: She was always--

Baum: And then you had to ask her to l--

Chall: That may have been, I may have had to ask her to l--

Baum: Because it was almost impossible--

Chall: I’d forgotten that, that’s quite right--

Baum: --I think, and s--

Chall: --knowing Mrs. Lowdermilk, that’s probably true.

Baum: Yes, because she would speak for Dr. Lowdermilk. And then, let’s see. If he spoke for himself, she would re-edit it, so finally we had to come up with, to get her to write, and separate them, because—I don’t remember, but it seemed to me that you had this terrible, impossible situation of trying to interview him--

Chall: Now, you remember that and I don’t, but that’s quite possible, that I must have come back to you with anguish--

Baum: I just—[laughter]. And then later, I think she wrote the chapter that you were going to interview on, I mean, you got the chapter _____

Chall: I got the chapter ahead.

Baum: And you figured out--

Chall: I would look at it--

Baum: --what you thought was needed.

Chall: I had been working in the agriculture library, and on forest material, and so I knew a part of his life that we needed to have, to integrate it with everything else we were doing, that she had left out. I mean, she wasn't interested in that part. So I had my interviews, my outline, and I think it pretty well worked out together. So that's why, but we had this two-volume book, the first two-volume book that we had ever put out.

[End tape 4, side A; begin side B]

Chall: It was a difficult problem, and out of it came a mag--

Baum: It was a wonderful--

Chall: --incredible--

Baum: --interview. People have used it so much.

Chall: And it's all over. It was sent to China, the Chinese wanted it, because he'd worked there for so many years—he'd lived there and worked there. And of course, in Israel, so we had his career from the time he was a child and a Rhodes scholar, and a forester, and then his life in China, and then his life in Israel, and then his life in the United States. And what was interesting is that Mrs. Lowdermilk always—I always had lunch with them afterwards. She cleared the table and made lunch. She always said, "You're getting Walter at the eleventh minute, the eleventh hour," or something like that. And sure enough, it wasn't very long after we had that very fine reception at the Magnes Museum, that he had a stroke, and he went off to—he lived quite a while after that in the Veterans' Hospital in Palo Alto.

But one of the other aspects of the Lowdermilk interview was that we didn't have enough money. And as you read all the people who gave \$500 here, \$200 here, whatever it was—that I had to learn from you was how to go around and get this money. And of course, to me it was just—I had done a lot of fundraising for the League of Women Voters, but this was a little different. [laughs]

So that was an experience.

Baum: The reception was the presentation, and it was at the Magnes Museum--

Chall: That's right.

- Baum: I can still see it, they stood up by the steps that winds up--
- Chall: Remember that wonderful punch they served?
- Baum: Yes. And people came to honor Dr. Lowdermilk--
- Chall: Yes!
- Baum: --from other countries, I forget--
- Chall: And they came from the campus, I remember Dr. [Henry E.] Erdman was there!
- Baum: Yes, it was--
- Chall: I had been interviewing him, but even so. Yes, it was--.
- Baum: And it was, I thought—and then, as you say, then within a couple of weeks, he was out of it.
- Chall: Yes, that's right.
- Baum: And it was so wonderful that before—while he was still alert that he got honored by all those people--
- Chall: --and he was enjoying it—[cross talk]
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: It was a great day, and I remember how difficult it was to get him up there, remember?
- Baum: No, I don't remember that.
- Chall: He couldn't get up those stairs.
- Baum: Oh.
- Chall: And we finally had to bring him in through the--
- Baum: Oh, that back door--
- Chall: --the back, yes. But I also—let's see. Well, you had said that we need to honor Dr. Lowdermilk, and so knowing that Mrs. Lowdermilk had organized the Hadassah chapter at Berkeley, I called them and they said they would be very pleased to do it. And I think that was in 1969, because--
- Baum: Why doesn't it say Hadassah in there? [Catalogue I]

- Chall: Probably not.
- Baum: It doesn't. Maybe they didn't contribute money.
- Chall: No, they just did that reception. But I think that was the first--
- Baum: Big presentation.
- Chall: --big presentation that we had, in 1969, and I don't know just when—it just developed that you began to have them all the time. I don't think it was right after, but that was really a very good one.
- Baum: Probably because that was one so significant, so successful.
- Chall: Yes, it was. And when I heard that—I remember getting the news that Dr. Lowdermilk had had a stroke, and I think somebody called me, maybe Mrs. Lowdermilk, and told me that he was in the hospital, and I remember it was, Saturday or Sunday, and I was very sad. I went outside and told Harold, and he said, "Malca, you are interviewing old people. They're going to be dying. They're going to be dying after you've had your interviews, or while you're having your interviews. You've just got to get used to this. You can't cry every time you lose an interviewee." And so I really took that to heart. I realized he was absolutely right.
- Now, that [notice about hiring Chall] was in February, 1967, the monthly log. Then you also wrote about the San Mateo Historical Society, and Russians, and that you were doing personnel interviews, so you must have been hiring. You also talked about a donated tape, Negro history, Lulu Holmes. I think you were trying to get a Negro history project going. But I don't know who Lulu Holmes was.
- Baum: I don't think Lulu Holmes was black. Let me look it up again. And we'd not talked about donated oral histories before, so I know that we did have to work out a whole way to handle them.
- Chall: Yes, and they were coming in, I think, at a pretty good pace--
- Baum: Oh, this was the one Helena Brewer did. Lulu Holmes set up higher education for women in Japan, right after World War II.
- Chall: Well, that was not a black history--
- Baum: No, and Helena knew her and agreed to do the interview in 1966. It was quite short, fifty-four—she only interviewed her about setting up these plans for women's education, higher education, and didn't talk to her about other things. Because I think Lulu Holmes was dean of women at the University of Washington before that, or something, that didn't include that. Oh, gosh, yes.

- Chall: Well, I guess when I'm taking my notes, there must have been something [in the 1967 log that suggested] you were interested in Negro history.
- Baum: Yes, and I'm sure we were working on that.
- Chall: I know you were, because it's on your list every now and then indicating what you want to do.
- Baum: Oh, yes.
- Chall: You wanted to get some local leaders in the Negro community in the Bay Area. You were interested in the mining series. Then Charles Wessels. You wrote that you had a Charles Wessels manuscript. And the Charles Cross manuscript. Now, I just took this in rough notes, but probably I would guess that means that you were working on them, that they were in progress.
- Baum: Glenn Wessels--
- Chall: Oh Glenn—
- Baum: Glenn. And I think that's one that Suzanne did. Probably university history. [reading Catalogue I] Glenn Wessels, *Education of an Artist*, 326 pages! So it's a long one. Interviewed 1966 by Suzanne Riess.
- Chall: Well, then that was probably a—it was either finished or is it in some sort of final form, and the same with, is it Charles Cross, Cross—I wasn't sure in the--
- Baum: You couldn't read it? Let's see. I don't think whatever you're saying is right, but I don't know what it is.
- Chall: We did interview somebody named Cross.
- Baum: Ira.
- Chall: Ira Cross, yes.
- Baum: Ira Cross, oh, yes. An economist.
- Chall: Yes. So that was available, that was in manuscript--
- Baum: In the University of California histories, oh yes.
- Chall: And who did that? I remember that being around a bit.
- Baum: Oh, that was Joann Ariff earlier.
- Chall: Oh, she did that, that's right.

- Baum: Yes. Oh, my. And you know, Ira Cross was a professor of economics. Everybody who knew him, and he was a required course, I think. Everybody that I've ever talked to who were alumni, especially when we got into this alumni project, every student wanted to tell me about when he took his course from Ira Cross. [laughter] He made a real impression. [laughs]
- Chall: You had assigned transcriber-typists, and you named them in this monthly report. There was Betty Dubrovic, do you remember Betty Dubrovic?
- Baum: Yes, I remember her.
- Chall: Sue Gangwer. [In t this same February, 1967 report] you listed your interviewers: Nathan, Ariff, Fry, and Riess. And of course, you'd just hired me, so that's another one. There were five of us now. Then there was an accounting of hours. Joan Ariff, total hours for fiscal year was Cross, 358; and then in pen, over on the side, you had also put in how much money that was.
- Baum: Oh, yes.
- Chall: Penned in \$1,273. [laughter] And then there was Blaisdell, Joan Ariff: her total was 298 hours, and you had penned in \$1,050. And then there was something called Denna, but maybe it's because--
- Baum: Dennes, Dennes. Is that Suzanne?
- Chall: Dennes, I see.
- Baum: I think William Dennes--
- Chall: Oh, that's it, that was twenty-one hours. You didn't put any--
- Baum: No, I didn't figure out the cost.
- Chall: No, it was only twenty-one hours anyway. D-e-n-n-i-s?
- Baum: D-e-n-n-e-s. [murmurings] These were very interesting interviews. I can't imagine—William Dennes, philosophy, professor of philosophy. No, [reading Catalogue I] interviewed by Joann Ariff.
- Chall: Oh, that was Ariff still.
- Baum: Oh, yes. Maybe I was figuring out how much we paid Ariff.
- Chall: Yes, this was all Ariff's actually. This was Cross, Blaisdell, Dennes. Also you listed a foreign student, twenty-two hours, and print making, which was really her field, printmaking, that was twenty-five hours. I think at that point she was actually trying to get money for a print making series--

- Baum: That's right, and she did go out trying to get funds.
- Chall: I don't know that she ever was able to.
- Baum: No, we never did get that. Allen Blaisdell, director of International House, she did that. I'd like to see Joann Ariff.
- Chall: Then I have your annual report now—the annual report for '66-'67. So those were monthly logs we have been talking about. Okay, things are looking a little bit better. Funding from university: the appropriation was \$15,800, so they really hadn't upped it in--
- Baum: No. [laughs]
- Chall: It was \$15,000 a couple of years before, and you got \$800 more. But you had grants from various donors, and you had \$500 from the Harvey Fund, and the UCB Chancellor's Office. That was to complete, if I've got it down right, to complete the J. B. Levison interview [spells]. And somewhere else I have a note that leads me to believe that Rosemary Levenson had something to do with that interview.
- Baum: What was the date of it?
- Chall: Now, this is the annual report for '66-'67.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: And I don't know whether the J. B. Levison interview was ever completed—well, it says completed—but remember, I think I saw a folder full of Levison material.
- Baum: I told you that Rosemary did a Levison, but I'm sure that that was not funded by anything here, so that's what I don't understand.
- Chall: I see, well--
- Chall: Well, you know, when I took notes, I put all this information on one long line, because I thought that it meant that the UCB Chancellor's Office had given you money to complete it. But that could be wrong, my interpretation--
- Baum: It must be something—it must not be true. Because I think that the Levison—the one that Rosemary did—went on for much later than that, and that we didn't get money from anywhere.
- Chall: Okay, then it may not have ever been finished.

- Baum: We did an Alice Gerstle Levison. Let's see. Let me—[checks Catalogue I]—two, seven [murmuring, cross talk].
- Chall: That came much later, though. Wasn't she involved with the environment?
- Baum: I think. [looking through papers, both murmuring] *A Family Reminiscences*, interviewed by Ruth Teiser. It was very early on, and [it was about] the Fireman's Fund Insurance. [reading] "A Jewish Victorian upbringing in San Francisco, the Gerstle and Sloss families, the Alaska commercial company, the--
- Chall: When did she do that?
- Baum: '66. I'm sure that--
- Chall: Mm-hmm.
- Baum: Well, there were Levisons in the printing business, and that's probably why Ruth ...
- Chall: Okay. Then you also got \$150 from Mrs. Shattuck, and Mrs. Jossis [spells], to do an interview on mining towns.
- Baum: Oh, yes! Oh, I must—it didn't say who it was, does it? A man came in, and he said that he would like to pay—no, wait. Somebody wanted to pay for his mother's interview, and she had grown up in some Colorado—it was a pretty exciting story. If I knew what it was, I could look up which interview—it would be in mining—but anyhow. [Bessie Launder Richards (1885-1969), interviewed 1967] So I sent somebody out, it was a not regular interviewer. They interviewed this old woman, and we have it in our mining, in our group of things. It's just a little tidbit of growing up hanging on the edge of a mountain where the--. Anyhow, years and years later, some woman came up to me and she said that she—I think that was her mother that had been interviewed, and she said, "You know, that gave Mother so much pleasure, it was the finest thing that we ever did for her." [laughs]
- Chall: Oh, really? Yes. That made us realize--
- Baum: I know who did it, I remember who did the interview too. [Melville Erskine, Jr.]
- Chall: Can you find this?
- Baum: I mean, there's these little personal things that—that would be in mining in the--

Chall: Yes, it says Mrs. Shattuck, but I wonder whether it was Mr. Shattuck [who came in to see you]. No, I have both Mrs. here. [looking through papers]

Baum: Wonder what we put mining in—well, go on.

Chall: Well, maybe you can find that.

And then finally, you got \$1,000 from the Friends of the Bancroft Library that you would use for diverse memoirs, so that was a little extra from the Friends. I guess you had been cultivating the Friends of the Bancroft Library?

Baum: Oh, yes.

Chall: Now, then you have a list of where you got money for different things that you were doing. The Water Resources Center gave you \$2,100 for the interview with Lowdermilk. Then the Center for Eastern European and Slavic Studies gave you \$1,750 for the series on Russian émigrés, \$1,000 to complete the interview of [Aleksandr] Lenkoff, [Valentin V.] Fedoulenko, and [George C.] Guins--

Baum: Guins [corrects pronunciation, spells].

Chall: And \$450 to final type Guins and [Nagy-Talavera Miklos] Nagy, I don't know how you pronounce that. Then, you got money from the Forest History Society, \$500 to interview a geneticist, \$1,000 to interview and arrange for the deposit of personal papers of Emanuel Fritz--

Baum: Oh, my! That was an amazing story, yes, oh, yes.

Chall: And \$1,000 to interview on forest history. So, now you were pulling in a lot of money here. What's the Fritz story?

Baum: A lot of money! That went in—it wouldn't do anything now.

Chall: Yes, that's right. This is 1966-67. But look what you were [accomplishing]—It's the fact that you were getting it in, you were getting it in. RFF [Resources for the Future] gave you \$3,000 to complete the interview on the Forest Service policy. The California Alumni Foundation gave you \$2,500 to continue the interviews on university history.*

Baum: Who gave it to us?

Chall: The Cal Alumni.

* The total for all grants and donations in the 1966-1967 annual report was \$30,750, university funds. \$15,800.

- Baum: Oh, yes, because we went to them every year.
- Chall: Yes, well, it came through. And then the report lists your donated tapes program. You had a videotape of forty-five minutes on William Schofield on lobbying, so that was 1966-67, and that was fresh out in 1966 when you went to the—yes. You'd just got it. It's a sixteen millimeter film, I think it is—how many minutes do you think it was?
- Baum: I don't know, I think--
- Chall: Oh, it's forty-five minutes: it's sixteen-millimeter film, being shown around. And then you also noted equipment, an IBM electric typewriter. I guess you were going to buy it, or did buy it. That might have been the first that we got. A small Panasonic tape recorder, that cost \$87. You didn't list the cost of the typewriter. And a Tandberg tape recorder for transcribing, that cost \$250.
- Baum: Boy, that was our big expense, when we got that transcribing machine.
- Chall: So 1966-1967 was really a banner year.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: It really was.
- Baum: In 1966, let's see. No, in 1965, I think, or so, I was teaching half time. Before '66, I was teaching in Oakland half time, so all the things I was doing were half time. But then I—it was about when Noah was going to be born, and I decided I couldn't stand teaching any more, which I loved, I just couldn't hardly give it up, but my babysitters would disappear right at the morning, right early in the morning, when I couldn't get a substitute teacher. You couldn't have, you just couldn't be counting on babysitters when you absolutely had to be there. So I gave up my teaching position, and that was right after—oh, I had been offered a full-time teaching position at Merritt College, Merritt Community College, but then I told them I was pregnant and I'd have to be out a month, and they said no. So that's what cast the die. So on that time, I decided I would have either to become an English teacher, or an oral historian. That was my flip of the--
- Chall: Well, but that--
- Baum: Doesn't show in there.
- Chall: Well, maybe it does show, maybe it shows because all of these things--
- Baum: Because in '66 I had more time to work on it.

- Chall: It may show that, because there's just a lot coming in and being done. You went to the colloquium, and you were doing speeches around locally. I think that's a very interesting idea, that it might have [been because you were giving full time to ROHO.] This is one of the major annual reports. I mean, the others are a little shorter, but this shows money coming in, a lot of it.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: The appropriation was \$15,800 from the university, plus another \$1,000 from the Friends of the Bancroft Library, but I didn't ever add [all the money] up, but this is a lot. There's just a lot of money here. When you think of what there was before. You produced this breakdown of a full-length memoir series for \$10,000 in 1966.
- Baum: [laughs]
- Chall: [reading from the 1966 scrapbook memo on the cost of a memoir] "Expense and materials, tapes, equipment upkeep, preparation of five bound volumes, deposit the final volume, twenty cents a page, photos two dollars each volume, and binding five dollars each volume." And you felt that you were getting your money back. So that's '66, to '67, and that's about the place where I thought we might leave off today.
- Baum: That was a big shift, when we started applying for money outside, and it wasn't just a shift for me, it was a shift in the university. Because before that time, it was frowned upon. Faculty did not go after money, nobody went after money—except with the university. You'd lobby with the university, but you weren't out in the community shaking your tin cup. And after that, they began to—and I think the university's percentage of money that they got from the state, as compared to how much they spent in total, that they got lots more money after that. They were serious, became serious about getting donations.
- Chall: And so otherwise, they might not have allowed you to go out after the money like this?
- Baum: It might have been, I don't know. There was a lot of hostility—let's see, there was a woman, nutritionist. Anyway, she'd gotten some money a long time ago, before—because the university didn't fund her research. So she got some money from a baby food company, and that was really criticized. It was inferior research, it was whatever, because she hadn't been—I mean, it wasn't okayed, like by the university putting up the money.
- Chall: But they wouldn't put it up for her, and so she--
- Baum: And they wouldn't put it up, and it was probably because she was a female.
- Chall: Yes, I was just wondering.

- Baum: Yes, they've done a lot of research on that since, and that woman's—what is the building that is named after her?
- Chall: Yes.
- Baum: And so then I realized that I--
- Chall: Better go get it, huh?
- Baum: Well, if nobody's going to fund it, you can either drop dead, or you can [laughter] go try to do something else.
- Chall: The money had started to come in from RFF and Forest History almost without your even asking for it.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: So this probably gave you a feeling that you should go out and try. Well, most of this other funding did come in.
- Baum: And after a certain time, we went every year to the Alumni Foundation, which was Dick Erickson, he was the head. He had a council, and the council gave, determined where the money that came into the alumni fund gifts went. So it had to go before the council. And one of the people on the council was Miss [Agnes] Robb, and Miss Robb liked our office, and so she always made sure that somebody from the university was being interviewed by ROHO.
- Chall: Oh, well, Agnes Robb was the secretary, wasn't she, of the—she was a—I think she was the secretary for the regents, was she?
- Baum: No, she was Sproul's secretary.
- Chall: Did we ever interview her? Seems to me we tried, but I think she wouldn't tell, she wouldn't talk.
- Baum: I think we did. Yes, and she wouldn't tell.
- Chall: That's right, she wouldn't talk. [laughs]
- Baum: Can't imagine that we didn't--
- Chall: I'm sure you tried, and I think—somehow I think Harriet Nathan may have been involved in that.
- Baum: Agnes Robb. Agnes Robb. Yes, now I'm beginning to remember. [pause, looking into Catalogue I] Robert Gordon Sproul and the University of California, 134 pages—yes—

[end audiofile 9, end of session]

Interview with Willa Baum
 Interviewed by Malca Chall
 Interview 6: March 2, 2005]
 [Begin audiofile 10 (tape 5, side A)]

Chall: We've been going through chronologically, and I thought we'd go on chronologically a little more today, but first, pull some things together. I really am planning to finish at about 1972, '73. We'll see how it goes.

In 1967-68, that's about where we left off last time, you delivered your annual report to Bob [Robert] Becker, and it went to Mr. Coney. We haven't talked about Bob Becker. I guess he came after Mr. Michel, in terms of whom you had to report to.

Baum: No, no. Bob Becker was Bancroft Library. Mr. Michel was the [main] library.

Chall: That's right, so--

Baum: And at some point, when we got into Bancroft--

Chall: You're right. [July 1, 1965] Then you worked through Bob Becker.

Baum: And Bob was interim, I think, because Jim [James] Holliday was [Bancroft Library] director for one year also. There was an interim period, and I guess it was after Dr. Hammond retired. Yes, I'm pretty sure he retired, and then he died. So there was an interim period, and Bob Becker had been in the Bancroft Library, I don't know what position. Some administrative position. So when there was no director, he took over for some time. I must say that, the same as ROHO, the action in the Bancroft Library was just nothing like it is now. Things moved slowly, and there were few people, no push, no grants, no—I mean, it was a different world.

Chall: It's hard for us now to see that.

Baum: Yes. And people in the Bancroft, let's see. They were all scholarly people, very fine people.

Chall: They were all in their own little--

Baum: In their square, which had—Estelle Rebec was head of manuscripts. Oh, dear, and I was just thinking of her. Oh. Marie—and I can't remember Marie's last name [Byrne].

Chall: I'll put it in, because I do have it in my telephone book.

Baum: But they were—they did a lot of work on those manuscripts, and we worked with them. But they were of the old genre, and so Estelle would not, did not

want to take on more work than they could handle. So she was not an entrepreneur to get grants or things like that, because they really had a small staff and small space. They were way down in the basement there, handling things, Estelle and Marie, and they had other people working with them. They were very good, and they did very precise kind of work. They didn't slash through a whole collection of papers in a month or something, no; they looked at things, and they wrote catalogue cards that really explained what was in this collection. So in a way, I suppose it represents similarly to what's happened to ROHO more recently, that we slash through—now the office slashes through and doesn't do the excellent work we did before.

Chall: Are you thinking maybe that the archivists at Bancroft don't do the same kind of--

Baum: Oh, I know they don't. Because they can't. I mean, stuff is just pouring in--

Chall: Well, that's true, because—what—I guess [Earl] Warren left his papers, and [Henry J.] Kaiser left his papers, and [Governor Edmund G.] Brown left his papers, and Mr. Fritz left his papers, and--

Baum: Oh, there's so many.

Chall: And it was coming in.

Baum: And each head of a department now is very entrepreneurial about collecting papers, and collecting money to process them.

Chall: Oh, yes, that is an important aspect of collecting the papers, is to have somebody—because I know a young archivist, and she was paid just to take care of some person's papers, I don't know who it was. When she did that, she was finished, went on to some other archive. But she was hired just for that.

Baum: When I did come in, there was an elderly gentleman working for Bancroft. He was a scholar of some kind. He went up and down the state looking in things, but he also collected papers for the Bancroft. So he had some kind of a small job there. I don't know what it was, but that was their outreach for papers. [laughter] And the director of the Bancroft Library—oh, and Dr. Hammond was a very personable gentleman in old Americana style. He was not a fancy gentleman like Dr. [James] Hart, but he was very comfortable with the kind of people who'd been big—well, I knew he was comfortable with land owners in the Central Valley. They were cut from the same piece of wood, I guess. Anyway, he was a very enjoyable gentleman, and the people who gave him things liked him. But he never was out there shaking his tin cup. [laughs]

Chall: Well, they were just living on what they had. You couldn't live on what you had, because you were out there exploding.

- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: And exploring.
- Baum: But it was a whole change in the university's point of view, I'm sure. Everything changed at the same time, more or less.
- Chall: I see. That's what enabled you to go out and [talk to] NEH and Rockefeller and--
- Baum: I think. Yes, I just don't think people went after grants. Maybe there weren't foundations even.
- Chall: Yes, I guess the Rockefeller Foundation had been around for a long, long time, but NEH came on in the—later. Early seventies, I guess, late sixties. So that it wasn't available.
- Baum: I don't know where this digression came from, but--
- Chall: That's all right. Digressions are what make oral history worthwhile.
- Baum: Yes. No.
- Chall: Well, I did want you to tell me a little bit about--
- Baum: Oh, we started with Bob Becker.
- Chall: Yes, because—so it was more comfortable now that you were sort of under the aegis of the Bancroft Library instead of--
- Baum: Yes, because—I can't think, we never had any regular meetings with Mr. Michel. And I don't think I had a regular meeting with Dr. Hammond. But I could go in and talk to him any time that I had a question or a problem. He was very approachable.
- Chall: Well, that was nice.
- Baum: Yes, it was. And Bob Becker—I was sort of a colleague more of Bob Becker. He—we were more on a buddy-buddy basis, rather than the director basis. Later on, after we got a director, I suppose it was just Dr. Hart--
- Chall: Well, Dr. Hart came in as director in 1970, January 1970, but for a couple of months prior to that, in '69, he was sort of an interim director or whatever they might have called him, but he became actually full-time director in January of 1970.

- Baum: Because when Dr. Hart was director, we had a regular meeting once a week, and all the heads of the departments met at a certain time, and we all sat around a big table and talked about, presented our, whatever was happening in our office. We also had what we called show and tell, because people were getting manuscripts in, so everybody proudly came with one of their new things, and that was fun.
- Chall: And what did you—you brought in something, I'm sure.
- Baum: Well, I always reported—if we had a new finished oral history, or I reported on when something had started. I was not very active in the thing, because the main purpose of this meeting seemed to be that there were funds in the Bancroft Library, like people would leave a fund for some purpose, to collect this or that kind of things. So each department head would present an idea for something that they wanted to buy. And so mostly it was deciding what could be bought: how much it cost, and what fund it would come from. So that there was real, it seemed like sort of a democratic system in what got bought or not.
- Chall: I see, but there was competition.
- Baum: Yes. But I was not a part of that, because none of those funds ever went to oral history. We never got a fund. I mean, it was considered—the Bancroft really, and Dr. Hart was strong on this, it was papers. It was not tape recordings. [laughs] And it was pictures, pictures they—I think it was Dr. Hammond who bought the Honeyman collection. That was very controversial, because that was a big collection of pictures, and Bancroft had not ever collected pictures, except sort of illustratively, but not really. And the Honeyman collection was a big collection of pictures. It was hard to handle, but it certainly has, in terms of helping scholars, you can't write a textbook on anywhere in the West without coming to the Bancroft and using something from the Honeyman collection.
- Chall: That's right. Previously, though, from some fund or other, I guess it was a discretionary fund, the Bancroft Library always—after you came into the Bancroft Library, always gave you some funds. Then it was called a reappropriation.
- Baum: Don't believe that.
- Chall: Oh, truly? [laughter]
- Baum: You mean that was money that was not in our budget?
- Chall: I think so.
- Baum: My--

- Chall: I'd have to go back into some of my earlier notes, because--
- Baum: A reappropriation would simply be that we hadn't spent everything that we had.
- Chall: Let's see. I have here your 1967-68 annual report. [Your total income was \$39,324]; You accounted for \$9,325 from outside sources, UC appropriations and reappropriations, \$16,939. Something simply called outside, \$12,893. Bancroft for arrears work, \$9,512
- Baum: Yes. And that was the one [UC appropriations] I said was a wired—it didn't come through library funds and then—it was for ROHO.
- Chall: Aha, that was it. What you wrote as special: Bancroft for arrears work, \$9,512.
- Baum: I don't know what that is, but I'm sure it was—I mean, it was not something we counted on.
- Chall: No, I see, probably not. But your whole budget listed expenses, et cetera. Your total was \$39,324 [expenses for personnel, \$34,643 and supplies and equipment, \$4,681]. And then you indicated how much money you got from the Lowdermilk project, from various sources [\$1,712], and you indicated that you had requested [from the NEH] \$60,838 per year for a two-year project for Earl Warren, and that failed, but that you were told to try again. Then you had a number of prospects. One of them was International House. You indicated that you had contacted Rockefeller and got nothing from them. I don't know whether—we'd have to look into the catalogues later and find out if you ever did do anything with International House.
- Baum: We did, Harry Edmonds, the founder of all the International Houses.
- Chall: Oh. And on your prospective planning list was the steel workers union, we did, talked about that, longshore--
- Baum: Steel workers?
- Chall: Steel workers, you were planning something with Penn State, and I don't know whether that ever materialized.
- Baum: Oh.
- Chall: It was still pending in 1968.
- Baum: Oh, yes. Well, that never came off.
- Chall: It didn't.

- Baum: No. And I can't even remember what it was, but I did know the head of the project there at Penn State.
- Chall: It was the United Steel Workers of America. At that time, you also wanted to do one with the longshore union. Years later, it was just Harry Bridges. Medical and dental history was listed, and I noticed when I looked through one of the catalogues that you had actually developed some kind of a project on medical—or dental history at least.
- Baum: Dental history. And that was a donated project, and it was—oh, I can't remember who was the head of it. It was a professor over at UC San Francisco in the dental school. He had—I guess he'd served in World War II, and he was a dentist. So as medical—they were in the medical section—and much of the work involved plastic surgery to try and put together the faces of soldiers that had had their faces blown off or something, and there was also a lot of medical work as part of the war. He noticed that the men from England had the world's worst teeth. You couldn't even—they had to change the ways of reconstructing their jaws and things, because there were no teeth to hook things on. They'd built them—hooked onto teeth, but these English guys didn't have any teeth. And they just—I guess they'd had terrible, terrible food, diet, always. I mean, I think the English ate bread and chocolate.
- Chall: Yes, and liked candy, I think.
- Baum: Yes. So but anyway, this man was very interested in things that had happened in dentistry, so he wanted to document the first—some of the dentists in California here. He got some money from the Gold Cane Society, and the Gold Cane was a group of dentists, and each year, one dentist won the Gold Cane. They had money, and so it was kind of an honor to be selected by---. But anyway, this dentist, and he had an assistant, interviewed these fellows, and I believe they did their own transcribing. I don't think we did much about that. But they were fascinating interviews. Yes, they really were.
- Chall: I don't know when you did that. We can find that probably in that first Catalogue.
- Baum: Yes, it was a—[tape interruption] Oh, yes, here it is. [reading] “Dental History Project, 1967, Fourteen dentists who were instrumental in shaping the growth of the dental profession in California---” and the interviews were done, this is the assistant: [reading] Warren Longhurst, under the supervision of Dr. Robert Brigante. Yes, I remember, Dr. Brigante is the person, I remember. And Dr. Willard Fleming. I'm sure we did more with Fleming later.
- Chall: Yes, the name Fleming sounds—is that with one M?

- Baum: Yes. Underwritten by the School of Dentistry, UC San Francisco. Well, I'd say that was a—oh, and we just listed it as one entry, but—instead of listing all the dentists who were _____
- Chall: I see, but that was a series of donated tapes?
- Baum: No, they were books. No, they're transcribed.
- Chall: So they're part of our--. Blue bindings?
- Baum: I can't answer that.
- Chall: Yes, I can't--
- Baum: I would sort of think not. I don't think they were separate, but I don't remember that. But I was certainly pleased with that collection.
- Chall: Very good. Of course, most of the prospects, I think, you finally got into an oral history project.
- Baum: That's what I said--
- Chall: Because as we go through these lists--
- Baum: --if the person didn't die, we got them. [laughs]
- Chall: One way or another, either donated--
- Baum: It may have taken us a very, very long time. [laughs] Probably, a few of them we got too late.
- Chall: For example, nuclear physics was on your list for a long time, and sometimes it was the Lawrence Lab, and I think eventually, we didn't do it, but I think--
- Baum: They did it. They set up their own project. As I'm looking through these things, again, this is a digression—[looking through Catalogue].
- Baum: Chall: That's all right.
- Baum: [reading] *Ky Ebright, Crew Coach*. This was done by Arthur M. Arlett. Do you remember Mr. Arlett?
- Chall: Vaguely, I do. Was he a coach?
- Baum: Yes, he was something like a coach.
- Chall: He used to come into office--

- Baum: He was always in athletics, and we did a couple of athletics, and I think all of those were Brutus Hamilton, student athletics—well, he was a track coach. Interviewed by Edward Franklin, and that was a volunteer interviewer. So from time to time, we got some—oh, here's—we got some good stuff. Here's Clint [Clinton W.] Evans, California coach, much beloved. Done by Arthur Arlett. Mr. Arlett did some good things for us.
- Chall: Yes. The people who donated tapes did so because they wanted the interview done.
- Baum: Somewhere like donated tapes, they just came in with a collection, and gave it to us, and we organized—got it together to put it into the library. But a lot of them were really supervised by ROHO, and so they brought in their tapes and we'd transcribe them or whatever. So it was still donated tapes, but it had a lot of work on it done, and we were really friendly with the interviewees, the same as any of our regular people.
- Chall: And grateful.
- Baum: And grateful.
- Chall: Wine is always on your list, but wine we seemed to be able to do all the time. Once in a while we'd get a nice donation to do wine, and--
- Baum: Well, we used to get—wine was a regular donation from the Wine Spectator magazine.
- Chall: Yes. Well--
- Baum: You don't want to start that but--
- Chall: No, that came later. It was interesting that this year in the 1967-68 annual report [listing prospects], you combined banking and agriculture, because you felt that banking, the bankers—particularly we were thinking of the Bank of America because they really sponsored and helped a lot of farmers. And so you always combined the idea that you wanted to do banking and agriculture. And then there was another one, another potential project which had to do with transportation of agricultural products.
- Baum: We never did anything on that, I don't think.
- Chall: No.
- Baum: Banking and agriculture, we probably put them together because we only had one banker, or something—[laughs] you didn't want him standing alone!
- Chall: That's right. You tried to make it possible--

- Baum: I can't remember why, but--
- Chall: I think you wanted an agriculture project. You always—we were trying always to get the major farmers.
- Baum: Oh, yes, agriculture was--
- Baum: I'm trying to think of what—well, yes, the big farmer that I knew was W. B. Camp, and he was a major cotton farmer in Bakersfield.
- Chall: And you interviewed him, didn't you?
- Baum: I interviewed him, and I became very fond of him and his wife. He was recommended by Paul Taylor, when Paul Taylor was our advisor. And the fact was that Paul Taylor was on absolutely the opposite side of every point with W. B. Camp, and I think that that shows the kind of generosity or the scholarship of Taylor, that he wanted people interviewed who had opposite points of view, so that the scholars could work on it. He didn't just recommend his own side of whatever story.
- Chall: That's right.
- Baum: I think Taylor must have recommended Lowdermilk, too.
- Chall: No, Lowdermilk came from Lepawsky. Albert Lepawsky.
- Baum: Oh, Lepawsky, yes.
- Chall: Because they were neighbors.
- Baum: [laughs] These Berkeley neighbors have played a substantial part in our oral history program, if you want to know, how do you choose your interviewees, I say, Well, we get neighbors. [laughing]
- Chall: That's right. I think you told me one last week about neighbors.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: Art was always [on your prospective planning list], and we always did get something, combined something with art. I mean, you were good at pulling it together, and eventually, in 1971 well, it took several more years, but when the Zellerbach fund gave us money, we combined it with art, architecture, community service, and all the rest of it.
- Baum: Oh, yes, that was way down the line--
- Chall: Yes, it was, later on.

- Baum: But we did get art—[looking through Catalogue I] Glenn Wessels we did, in 1966. And let's see.
- Chall: Did Suzanne do Glenn Wessels?
- Baum: Suzanne Riess did that interview, and most of these art interviews do not say underwritten by anybody, and that means that it was back in the days when we just got money from--
- Chall: The university.
- Baum: From the university, and it was part of our—Oh, you said we got some money from the Bancroft Library, and here is one, 1971—[looking through Catalogue I.]
- Chall: Oh, well, that's, you see, after Dr. Hart came.
- Baum: Yes. Underwritten by the Friends of the Ban—yes, and I think Dr. Hart steered some Friends donations in, and I could put in a recommendation, and this was--
- Chall: And who was that--
- Baum: --George R. Stewart.
- Chall: Yes. Well, that's--
- Baum: Very appropriate.
- Chall: It was. And it would be appropriate for Dr. Hart to want that one done.
- Baum: Yes. Well, Hart and Stewart started the oral history project of the recent years. Yes. Two English professors.
- Chall: So I see that Dr. Hart would have an influence in the early days, when he was just really learning what you were doing.
- Baum: When he recommended George Stewart, he was director.
- Chall: I'm going to stop this now.
- [End tape 5, side A, begin side B]
- Chall: That catalogue has been very important for jogging the memory. We did just talk briefly about art. Then you had an idea that after Warren—you were sure you were going to get that Warren eventually—then you wanted to do

Governor Brown. You had an idea to go on with the governors. So that was—you've always had a list of projects that you wanted.

Baum: Oh, yes.

Chall: And then there was one on Negro culture, and eventually you did get blacks involved. Now, in—let me see. In your monthly logs in 1968, in April, there was a conference with James Herndon, president of the Negro Cultural Historical Association of San Francisco, regarding a series on Negro rights leaders. You and Ruth Teiser had gone there to talk to him. And eventually, you did get some--

Baum: Not really.

Chall: Not exactly what you had in mind maybe?

Baum: I think there was a group in San Francisco that did a number of those black, Negro rights leaders. What we ended up with, more or less, were black alumni, alumni of the university, who again were not just alumni but were significant California movers and shakers. But--.

Chall: Did we do one with the Pullman porters?

Baum: No. There was a project on West Oakland, or on Oakland. It was done by the Oakland Museum, with some kind of grant money, and I was an advisor to that. And they hired some interviewers, and they did a good job, I think. But eventually, it got caught up in agitations between the people who were leading it as to who had the rights to it, because they all thought it would be a wonderful book, or something. I think that's what happened. Whatever happened, it was not released. It just broke down, and I've never seen those interviews. I know they've been finished, and I think there may still be some people hovering over them. It was too bad. [laughs] But they do exist still.

Chall: But I think we hired—let me see, her name was Joyce Henderson--

Baum: Joyce Henderson--

Chall: --for a time. I think she was—well, I think she was hired to be a clerical person initially, but she was on the interviewer staff, and I think she did actually interview one or two, I think some old other notes of mine indicate this.

Baum: Yes, I can't remember who Joyce--

Chall: She was a young black girl, and--

Baum: Yes, she'd gone to Mills, I think.

- Chall: And she was with us for a few years; let me see if I can find her on my list here.
- Baum: I had grand plans for her, and if she had stayed, we could have accomplished that.
- Chall: Let's see. [murmuring]—this list.
- Baum: I remember one of the things I wanted on the catalogues was to have a list of the interviewers, and then all the interviews they did, because they were always, the interviews were--
- Chall: Joyce Henderson was with us—this comes out of the first catalogue—it had a list of the regular interviewers and editors, and then on the back page, it had a list of all the people who had done donated interviews, which was a very long list. But Joyce Henderson was with us from 1970 to 1973, so we aren't in 1970 yet. But I think that she—I believe that she did—let's see. [pause]
- Baum: I have no way of tracing her here.
- Chall: Some place I had a, it must be a note, that I put someplace else. [pause] But I think she tried to get some—and may have succeeded, actually, in getting one interview. In fact, I think she did. She did an interview, but I'm not sure whether it was an African American. [murmuring, inaudible]
- Baum: Her husband got a job in the state of Washington, I think, and so they moved. So that's why. And she had been working on developing a project of Negro churches, and the churches had an interesting history of splitting and doing this and that, and Joyce knew a lot about the churches.
- Chall: That would have been good.
- Baum: It would have been a great program.
- Chall: Is her name in the index in—no.
- Baum: She's just in the staff. Let's see. [shuffling papers]
- Chall: Her name is on the staff, and so that name—no, I don't think the staff people's names were ever in the index when they interviewed anybody.
- Baum: No. And I'm pretty sure that was a struggle. Suzanne and I struggled over the index, and I wanted somewhere a list of every interviewer, with a lead to all the interviews they did, because I thought a researcher, if they were serious, if they found a subject they were interested in and they could follow through with that interviewer, they probably could find all of our interviews that were related.

- Chall: Yes. The only ones that are listed are those contract ones. They're listed, the interviews they did.
- Baum: Not contract.
- Chall: Well, it says.
- Baum: Does it say?
- Chall: Well, of course, that doesn't necessarily mean it—it says, "Interviewers who have worked for ROHO on a brief contractual basis, or who have been present as joint interviewers with a regular staff interviewer, or who have created their own interviewing project and donated it to the donated oral histories program, are listed on the following page with the number of their interview entry." So you'll find it on the back of that page listing the ROHO interviewers [in Catalogue I, available in the Online Archive of California]
- Baum: Oh! Yes, I found the list, but I didn't find this thing that described it, and I thought, Isn't that silly? Nobody would know what this list is.
- Chall: Yes. Well, it took me a while before I looked at the bottom [of the page] myself, and then realized what those names were on the back. But that's very helpful, and this was a very helpful page on the staff.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: But it only goes up to 19—well, 1978 or '9, whenever that catalogue was published. [pause]
- Baum: We don't have a staff list on the next--
- Chall: Not on the next, not on the second catalogue.
- Baum: Oh, that's too bad, I guess we--
- Chall: Yes, I looked—it would have been nice, yes.
- Baum: I guess we thought we were--
- Chall: It's otherwise very, very complete. Well, let's see. We can go on here. You had a pre-planning series on Lawrence Radiation Lab and nuclear physics at UC, and you said they took over these themselves. In January 1968, according to your monthly log, you began research on a Jewish community series for the Magnes Museum, and you had selected Daniel Koshland and Mrs. [Rose] Reuben Rinder as the first two; I guess they were the first two.

- Baum: We planned that in cooperation with Seymour Fromer, and he was the director and founder of the Magnes Museum on the history of Jewish—what is it, history of Jews in California? No.
- Chall: Probably—well, I don't know what we called it, it's probably got a label in there somewhere. [California Jewish Community] Because we did it, and it got bigger and bigger as we made some choices. We went on with Rabbi [Edgar F.] Magnin, and then there was a friend of Rabbi Magnin's who wanted me—when I went to interview him, to find out about Rabbi Magnin—he wanted to be interviewed. His father had founded the Gillette razor blade company, or had invented the Gillette razor blade, and so we did him. [Walter S. Hilborn]
- Baum: Oh, yes, he was a businessman.
- Chall: Yes, and a lawyer, I think. And then—I think that was all [at that time] for that particular series. And then you developed another one, but much later, and that had to do with Jewish community leaders.
- Baum: Yes, that was a separate one. But these were just--
- Chall: I think the Magnes Museum didn't have any more money either.
- Baum: Well, the Magnes Museum never had any money. They had a hard, hard time to make their bills. I had a hard time--
- Chall: Getting \$100 from them.
- Baum: I had to fight with Seymour every interview, because the way we did it, often times if somebody was a prospect for us, because of whatever they'd done, and they were Jewish, prominent in the Jewish community, then I would call Seymour and say, "Would you like to have this person in your series? I think I can get the funding, but I will have it come through the Magnes Museum." So then whoever were the donors to that project donated the money to the Magnes Museum, and the Magnes Museum gave it to us. But they never gave it to us quickly. And that was because they were always, they didn't have the money, and they were trying to keep the electric lights on and things. And so I would fight—not fight, because I appreciated Seymour's problem. And he always came up with the money eventually, but it was not easy for Seymour, and I spent too much time [laughs]--
- Chall: That's right, on all of this kind of fundraising. I remember one time, I think we just wanted him to give us \$100 so that they could have their name on one of the projects as a sponsor, and their name went on the project. I'm not sure we ever got the \$100. [laughter] It was, "Just give us a little bit so we can put your name on there."

- Baum: Oh, yes, I did want them to have a fine project there.
- During 1968, we hired Marjorie Prince, who left after a while but came back, and she was a longtime employee. What did we call her—she was the front desk person, office manager.
- Baum: Office manager, right. She was wonderful.
- Chall: Oh, she was.
- Baum: What a sad thing when she finally left. [ed. 1981. She and her husband went to Saudi Arabia where he, an engineer with Bechtel, was helping to complete the royal airport.]
- Chall: Yes. We also hired Keiko Sugimoto [typist], and she stayed with us for a long time, Kay Sugimoto, in 1968, in May, and a person named Renee Kennedy, but I don't remember her.
- Baum: I don't remember her either. She must have--
- Chall: --not stayed long. Much of this comes through *CU News*, as well as on the monthly logs—Evelyn Fairburn, but she didn't stay with us very long.
- Baum: Oh, that was an interesting one. Evelyn Fairburn was an intern for the Forest History Society, and they asked—Elwood Maunder, the director of the Forest History Society, wanted Evelyn Fairburn trained in oral history. So he funded her, and she came to work in our office. Oh, dear, and I cannot remember what interviews she did, not too many, because she didn't--
- Chall: She only stayed a month or so.
- Baum: Only a month or so?
- Chall: Well, let's see. Let me see what I found here. In your 1969 folder, your monthly report, let's see. [pause, looking at papers] Fairburn was terminated in 1/69, but you had hired her, I noticed, in 11/68.
- Baum: Well, that wasn't very long, was it.
- Chall: No, it wasn't very long.
- Baum: I can't remember what she did. I remember it was not a very good--
- Chall: Well, that's probably why it didn't work out.
- Baum: --not a good program, and I don't remember why. Because it would have been a good system, it would have enabled training for some people. Because

everybody was—oh, here. [looking through catalogue] Interviewed by Evelyn Fairburn. Woodridge Metcalf, interviewed—extension forester—in 1969.

- Chall: Okay, and she was hired in 11/68. This was your monthly--
- Baum: She interviewed in 1968, yes.
- Chall: Okay, and so she was terminated, according to your monthly report, or your annual report, in 1/69.
- Baum: Okay, that's the only interview I show her doing, and that probably sounds about right. I wonder what happened to Evelyn, if she went on in oral history or what. Probably not.
- Chall: No way of knowing. *CU News* [June, 1968] reported that Boris Raymond, on loan to the Bancroft Library University of Manitoba libraries, was completing a series of Russian émigrés conducted for ROHO under the auspices of Slavic and East European Studies. That was in June of '68, and then there's a note in your 1969 folder that it was completed. So he must have come just to finish them.
- Baum: He came back several years. He was like Dick Pierce: he'd been trained, he got his *PhD* here at Cal, and then he went off to Canada to teach, just as Dick Pierce did. They [Canada] must have been more interested in Russian history than [United States]. And so Boris did a few of, I think several interviews for us, and so he would come back.
- Chall: Let's see. [pause] In your 1969 folder there is another *CU News* report that you got a grant of \$20,000 from the California Wine Advisory Board to conduct interviews with men who had had a formative influence on the state's wine industry. And Ruth Teiser had interviewed already William Creuss just before he died. And that Richard Cobb, who was a transfer from UCLA oral history, would be handling the clerical work of the project. That was in *CU News*.
- Baum: Richard Cobb.
- Chall: I think that's, if I read--
- Baum: --copied it correctly, but I don't remember him.
- Chall: Yes. I don't think he stayed on very long.
- Baum: Probably not.
- Chall: Must have been hired to help Ruth--

- Baum: Yes, okay, I'm glad—the Wine Advisory Board, that's right.
- Chall: And that was in '69, so that was--
- Baum: I couldn't remember when this wine thing [started], and I didn't think it started with the *Wine Spectator*, but--
- Chall: No, *Wine Spectator* came much later.
- Baum: Yes, the Wine Advisory Board. We presented an application for them each year--
- Chall: \$20,000 was a lot of money.
- Baum: That was a lot of money, and Ruth and Catherine, Ruth Teiser and Catherine Harroun, I think I told you they'd been always related to the wine industry, through what? Maybe their research or something. But they did eventually come out themselves with a book on the California wine industry that won a number of prizes, just a historical book. So they'd been working on that a long time. They headed up our wine industry thing.
- Chall: There was an interesting little note at the end of your March 1969 report, and it says "Used manila folders needed, all donations accepted if usable."
- Baum: [laughs]
- Chall: I remember, we didn't even have money to buy folders.
- Baum: Oh, yes--
- Chall: But everything was in folders in those days.
- Baum: We put everything in the files into folders—oh, and then—yes, manila folders, and [then] we got them from all over the library.
- Chall: Yes, we were awash in folders, and many of them were very, very good.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: We used them until they began to wear out--
- Baum: Well, we had a bad time, because we sent all our manuscripts to be bound in a folder. Each manuscript, so maybe each—or book—had maybe ten copies, so there were ten folders, and they went to the bindery, and we couldn't get the bindery to give us our folders back. So we were using massive quantities of folders, and that was a great thing. One of our, maybe Wendy [Won] or someone, thought of getting the used ones from other departments, and we did

for a long time. I always thought it was wicked that the other departments threw away almost brand-new folders.

Chall: That's right. And I remember at the time, I was doing some work—going back and forth into, let's see, into the mayor's office in Hayward, because I was working with Ilene Weinreb. In the mayor's office, [I saw that] every member of the city council would get their material for the coming week's agenda in these beautiful envelopes, these manila envelopes, and I once said to the office manager, "What do you do? Do you use these envelopes again? They're just perfect." She said, "No, they get a new one each time." I said, "We could use those." And so about every month or so, I would go to the mayor's office, whether I had to see Ilene or not, didn't matter, I would just go up to the mayor's office and there would be this pile of beautiful envelopes, and I would bring them to the office.

Baum: Right, yes.

Chall: We got everything we could.

Baum: I'm afraid I insisted on miserliness. [laughter] Everything should be used again, all paper should be turned over and use the back of it.

Chall: That's right, oh, yes. I still do that. It was fun to see this in one of your monthly reports. Then in May of 1969, *CU News* reported that "An Oral History of The Prytanean Society, Its Members, And Their University, 1901 to 1920," was completed, and that it had been carried on for several years by the members.

Baum: They did. And they're up to 1940 by now, I think, they're still doing it. And the Prytanean Society, when they started their interviews, and Harriet Nathan, our interviewer, was a member of Prytanean Society, and she sort of headed this up, with helping them set up workshops and so on. They only did brief interviews, like maybe three or four pages, about the members' participation in Prytanean during the years they were at the university. I read them, and I saw who the people were. I mean, the most outstanding women who came through the university as students were in Prytanean Society, and so I said, "Get more about their lives, and especially what they did later." They have picked up on that, so they maybe have twenty pages. They print them. I mean, they print up a book, and it's usually in five-year units. All the interviewees for five years, and it takes them maybe five years to do a five-year batch.

Chall: Is it still ongoing, the Prytanean Society--

Baum: It's ongoing, it's ongoing. And those are very useful. If you know the person's year of going to school, you can find them in Prytanean probably, in the Prytanean collection--

Chall: Yes, I see. And then you can trace what these women did when they went out after school, they probably all went, worthwhile things, like Harriet Nathan, for example.

Baum: Yes.

Chall: I think we are coming to the end. I think I'll turn it off.

[end audiofile 10, begin audiofile 11 (tape 6, side A)]

Chall: Well, in July of 1969, we did get money—a five-year project for the Earl Warren series, Earl Warren in California. We got government and private funds. Of course, NEH gave us money, I think \$10,000, which we had to match. The \$10,000 matching funds came from private donors, after an extensive fundraising drive. And then another time, you wrote that one of the donors was the Cortez Society. Do you know what that was?

Baum: No.

Chall: Because I have notes about Cortez Society from two different places when you discussed who had helped with that interview, or series. Well, we can let that go. But also, you said that there was an eighteen-member advisory council.

Baum: Right.

Chall: Which included Allan Nevins. Was this just a paper advisory council?

Baum: Paper advisory—ah, yes. And that's the oral history application I said I found and should have had here, but it was the most impressive advisory committee, and we did talk to all those persons about it. I mean, they all participated, but one by one. They never gathered together in one room.

Chall: I see. Were they from all over the United States, or were most of them from California, except for Nevins?

Baum: No, mostly from California, mostly—there were a lot of them from Boalt Hall.

Chall: Yes. Because I think all his clerks had—and former clerks had given you funds--

Baum: One of our fundings was a donation from Former Clerks of Earl Warren's. That was the official name of this body of men who met at Boalt Hall. But we did use those advisors individually, if anybody we were interviewing had related to that person, that advisor, we went over and talked to him, or phoned

them up, or—so we tapped their brains, but we couldn't ask them to—you could never get those people together in one room. I mean—[laughs]

Chall: You had also hired June Hogan, who was a former reporter on the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and Frank Jones, who had written for *Newsweek*, to help conduct the interviews. I guess that worked out for a time, didn't it. [Chita Fry was, as planned, the project director.]

Baum: Yes. Well, June—let me see, June retired--

Chall: I think she stayed with you--

Baum: And I forget what Frank did.

Chall: June Hogan, on this list, let's see.

Baum: It's probably not there.

Chall: No, it's not on this [Catalogue] list. Let me see if I have it on another list I made. [pause then reading] June Hogan came in 1969, which would make sense, but I have no idea when she left. And Frank Jones...I don't have anything on him. But I think that Jones came in 1969 too. So that's—it matches.

Baum: Now, Frank Jones, he was a—not a well trained—I think maybe he was a labor journalist. Whatever he was, he was a regular, the kind of reporters you see in the movies. He'd come in, and he'd ask his questions—he was the kind of guy who would get the answers in twenty minutes. So--

Chall: Just the facts, ma'am.

Baum: So the questions were too blunt and too fast, and then in order, as was good reportorial, see, he would tell the person what he did, he would give a little review of "You did this and this and this," and then he would say, "Now, why did you do this?" and then the guy would answer quickly, see, and then he'd be out of there. Well, so we have on the transcript, we have one or two pages of Frank Jones giving his description of what the man did, and then he'd ask the blunt question, which was too blunt to get an answer. So I always used those transcripts to teach interviewers how not to interview for oral history. Frank Jones was, I'm sure, a good reporter--

Chall: But I think then you had decided that it was never a good idea to hire reporters to do oral history.

Baum: Yes, I decided reporters' training was too much at getting right to the heart of the question, bang.

- Chall: Yes, that's right. I do remember that now, about your using his interviews. In October of that year, which is 1969, you report that you and Chita were authors of a little—well, a little article called "A Janus Looks at Oral History," and it was reprinted in the *American Archivist*. That seems to have had a life of its own too. I think I've read it once, but I don't remember anything about it.
- Baum: It's a good article, but does it say I was a co-author?
- Chall: It says Amelia Fry and Willa Baum, authors of "A Janus Looks at Oral History."
- Baum: I think that was mostly Chita's, and it was very nice, and what it did was, we were always concerned with the things that, there's no absolute answer to anything. You do it this way or you do it that way, depending on the situation, and Chita and I spent a lot of time thinking about these—we were going to write a book on how to do oral history interviewing. And for a long time, we had a jolly time, once a week we went out to a restaurant--
- Chall: Oh, did you?
- Baum: --to have dinner and to plan our outlines and talk about what we did, and we had a good time, but we never got our book written.
- Chall: Well, you were too busy, both of you, but it would have been good, because Chita—she was a snapping bright person and so were you, so you must have had a lot of fun.
- Baum: We did.
- Chall: Working it out.
- Baum: I don't know if this fits in here, but I can't help but think of, we started going to an Asian restaurant, a little restaurant in Berkeley. It was quiet, and it had a sort of a little set-off place, part of the main dining room, which was small, but it was--. So there came a group there that must have been meeting on the same day, same night as we were. Slowly we began to listen to what they were planning, and they were a group that was getting ready for the aliens, the people from outer space--
- Chall: Oh, indeed!
- Baum: --who they thought were already here. And they would have to have rights, and they would have to have citizenship papers, and all kinds of legal problems would arise, and so these people were seriously planning how to deal with these individuals who didn't have a birth place or anything.

- Chall: My, they were forward-looking thinkers.
- Baum: And then one of them said, “Well, now, don’t talk so loud, there’s other people in this restaurant, and they may be either aliens or people who are listening in on us.” And then they all looked at us, because Chita and I were there every night when they were [laughter].
- Chall: Oh, no!
- Baum: So anyway, that’s a little funny story.
- Chall: That’s a great one.
- Baum: Yeah, I wonder whatever happened to that little club.
- Chall: But you continued to stay there?
- Baum: Oh, we didn’t care, they could deal with the aliens. We weren’t talking about anything secret.
- Chall: Marvelous. Now, in August, you were one of the speakers at the World Conference on Records and Genealogical Seminar in Salt Lake City, from August 5th to 8th. Your topic was “Oral History: A Genealogical Research Tool.” You put a short paragraph in *CU News* about that, and then there were some copies of thank-you letters in the folder, because you always sent thanks to people you met.
- Baum: What was the date for that?
- Chall: August 5th to 8th of 1968. What I found interesting, however, was that after the conference, *CU News* reports that Willa Baum took a vacation to Puerto Rico, and you stopped in New York to confer with Edith Mezirow, ROHO’s New York interviewer. So you took a real vacation.
- Baum: Well. [laughs]
- Chall: You went to Puerto Rico for a few days.
- Baum: I did go; it was a vacation, but my husband had a speaking engagement. We had a wonderful time in Puerto Rico. He was at a conference speaking, and I was just going along. Edith Mezirow was working on our interview with Harry Edmunds, the head of—the founder of the International Houses, who did live in New York.
- Chall: Oh, that’s it. Well, I remember years later, though, that you never liked to take a vacation, because you’d always say, “When I come back, there’s more work than I can handle.”

- Baum: Yes, that's right.
- Chall: So I thought, well, here you are in 1969—you actually took a few days off. But you wouldn't have done it probably if Paul hadn't been [going to speak in Puerto Rico.]
- Baum: Oh, no. [laughs] Oh, but let me see. The Salt Lake City—well, that was terribly exciting, and people came from all over the world. There were people from Russia and China, and just, it was—and we met in the, what did they call it, the Salt Palace, a great big meeting place. And I made some very good friends, primarily from Australia and England. Not more foreign than that. But the fellow who was—Imperial War Museum in London. That was--
- Chall: Oh, yes, and you had long contacts with him for many, many years.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: In your folders, there was this entire folder on the genealogical seminar, the record, and it was massive. There were speakers all day long from all over the country, all over the world--
- Baum: Yes, for several days.
- Chall: Yes. And I kept looking, because I had seen this in *CU News*, so I kept looking to see when you spoke. You had a little—there was a space for you on one of those days when you spoke. And I thought, Well, that's really—this was early in our career, 1969, and you were already going out, way out [to speak about ROHO].
- Baum: Yes, and let's see, what was my message? Because most of those, all those people--
- Chall: They were doing genealogical research.
- Baum: Well, the Mormons were eager, oh, they were so generous. They paid people's way to come, and we had a wonderful place in the Hotel Utah, everyone had a room, and oh, it was—well, what they were trying to do was to get places that had birth records, old churches and things like that, to make Xerox, or copy, microfilms, of their—what do you call those—birth records, and a lot of them did.
- Chall: Yes, well, the Mormons have the greatest collection of genealogical material in the world. From all over the world.
- Baum: Yes. And the only thing I could—of course, oral history is not too good for genealogy, because--

- Chall: I know, I wondered how you wiggled a speech in there!
- Baum: Oh, so how did I wiggle in? My point was that when you do an oral history of a living person, that you must ask them about their forebears, and that you must find out something about the lives of their family, because so many oral histories are focused on just one thing. I wanted people to realize that there were other uses for the oral histories, and one of them might be genealogical, which could be either on the person themselves, or back further. And my real criticism of genealogy had always been that they just get you born, married, and died, and you don't have a job, and you don't have any historical significance. So I could talk about making your genealogy include the history—where these people fit in the culture. So I had my little agenda there.
- Chall: Good, that's right, and you put it in. Well, this was a major, major conference.
- Baum: Oh, but I remember one thing, and I probably shouldn't put this in, but, let's do it. There was a speaker from Columbia University. Was it there or--? He said that what you really need for an oral history is a willing listener. You don't have to know a lot about the subject, as an interviewer. And then he gave as an example that they had done an oral history of the librarian of Congress, and they sent a charming young woman who didn't know anything about librarianship or whatever, but the fellow was happy. It worked out well. If you're a pleasant and so forth, interesting. So later, where was I? I was sitting in the back of a room listening to a lecture, and an old man came up and he asked who was I, and I [told him], and he said, "I read one of your interviews." It was one that Ruth Teiser had done. He said, "I wish I'd been interviewed by Ruth Teiser." And he was the librarian of Congress! [laughs]
- Chall: Really! Oh, no.
- Baum: So I gathered that, happy as he was with his young interviewer, he would have liked to have an old lady that knew something about—[laughing]
- Chall: Oh, I think that's a great story. That's really good. And it must have made you feel good.
- Baum: It did, yes.
- Chall: You didn't have to prove your point very much. Not to yourself or your staff.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: Now, in October 1969, you announced through *CU News* the publication of *Oral History for the Local Historical Society*, published by the Conference of California Historical Societies.
- Baum: Mm-hmm.

- Chall: That's had a long history. Then you went on to write how to transcribe.
- Baum: Later.
- Chall: How to transcribe oral histories. Of course, as you pointed out last week, all of the techniques that we used at the time you were writing it have changed, but the ideas are still--
- Baum: Well, not the basic--
- Chall: --techniques of oral history, but the material that we use, the technology changed.
- Baum: Yes, the technology, but no, the—and let's see. When did I do that little booklet? I think I've talked to you about this, but—
- Yes, I think that historical societies would invite me to come to speak to them. It seemed like I couldn't keep going out, so I'd just write something [laughs], and they can sell it. Oh, and the pictures are original. Nobody will have the original any more. The first printing, we got the pictures, and they were all real old-fashioned pictures out of Wells Fargo library, which archives—they had catalogues of prints you could get for advertising, when you're advertising. They were the funniest little things, and we used those, they were beautiful. Well, when they reprinted it for more commercial publication, they put in just photographs of real people, which weren't nearly as cute as these, the Wells Fargo archived ones. Oh, that was with Ruth and Catherine.
- Chall: Then there's no date on this one—there was a letter to Gould Coleman, editor of the Oral History Association Colloquium Proceedings, regarding a joint session that you had had with Betty Mason, and your topic was “Inside Oral History Offices.” You had corrected a fifty-four-page transcript. Do you recall that?
- Baum: What was the point of the little story?
- Chall: Well, I suppose Betty Mason was inside the Columbia, wasn't she?
- Baum: Oh, she was the head of Columbia, and Louis Starr was the faculty head. But Betty ran the show, Betty Mason.
- Chall: That's right, and you ran ROHO, so you must have had some little conversation about what it was like.
- Baum: Oh, we did, we talked about how they ran their thing and how we ran ours. But I can't remember why that point would have been in any--
- Chall: Well, you had written a letter to Gould Coleman [about this transcript].

- Baum: Oh, you had the letter.
- Chall: Well--
- Baum: Gould Coleman, yes, I remember him too.
- Chall: Yes, and so—I just took brief notes—but there was a fifty-four-page transcript and you had corrected it, so you had some correspondence with Gould Coleman about it.
- Baum: Well, in the early days of the Oral History Association, they tape-recorded our speeches, and transcribed them, and put them out as the proceedings.
- Chall: Oh, well, that must have been what it was.
- Baum: Yes, and that's what it was. They were very good. And then after a while, they began having several speeches at the same hour, and they got too big. But that was a good—those proceedings are just really little textbooks about what people were doing.
- Chall: Yes. Where are they? Where are they these days, all that material?
- Baum: I don't know. I should have it all somewhere.
- Chall: You must have them in your boxes somewhere.
- Baum: Oh, not necessarily.
- Chall: Ah, let's see. There was something else interesting in those reports. [pause] Oh, yes. *CU News* reported that Ruth Teiser was the author of "Transcriber Fantasies," a reprint from the Book Club of California quarterly in the fall of 1969, and as I recall, she wrote a really good article on transcriber fantasies. Those are the sort of the things that you and I would collect in our folder called Funnies. But our transcribers took—how would I put it?—they were not pleased with that article, because they felt that it--
- Baum: Made fun of them.
- Chall: Made fun of them. Do you remember that?
- Baum: I don't remember the transcribers being annoyed. I do remember when Ruth wrote that, she was always collecting little things that transcribers typed that sounded sort of like what was said, but [laughs]--
- Chall: That's right, and--

Baum: And you collected those always. What did we do with those? Did we ever use them again? Because some of them were just terribly funny.

Chall: I know they were, they were wonderful. I don't know why I remember that some of the transcribers were upset at this, but maybe that was only one or two of them, because they thought it made fun of them. Because I suppose it was the way they—well, they listened, or they really didn't know what the—they didn't know the subject. They could really just make it up.

Baum: Maybe if they read the funny, they wouldn't even realize what was funny about it.

Chall: True. [laughs] Oh, dear. Yes. And the Miriam Feingold joined the staff in December of '69, so we had her for quite a number of years [until 1979]. She worked, I believe, on the Warren project, and other things. Then she went off and developed her own business.

Baum: Mm-hmm. You ought to put down how we found her.

Chall: I don't know.

Baum: She was, Ruth Teiser and Catherine Harroun lived in San Francisco, and this small lady, Mimi was small, was their mailman. She'd come every day and bring their mail. She'd look at the interesting things in their mails, and so finally she spoke to Ruth and Catherine about what do they do? She had a *PhD* in history, and I guess she was being a mailman--

Chall: She couldn't find a job.

Baum: Right then, yes. So she came over and applied, and we hired her.

Chall: Yes, and she was good. Well, isn't that interesting. I never did know how many of these people were hired.

Also, with no date on it, at least I didn't put a date on it, you were then discussing the fact, I guess in your 1969 folder, that there should be articles about ROHO, and about oral history, in relevant magazines, and you suggested that we write for the *California Librarian*, *California Monthly*, and the *Bancroftiana*. So you were looking ahead, as usual.

Baum: Yes, I can't remember. But I remember we did make a whole survey of magazines that might be relevant. But I don't think it was necessarily for articles. We wanted to list the oral histories we had finished in the field of whatever was the magazine. And it was again our effort to get them out into other libraries and to have them where researchers would find them.

Chall: Well, I remember that, because when I first started, you had sent me down, I didn't have interviews taking up my time all the time after I did Walter Lowdermilk, so you sent me down to the reference library to go through all those massive books from different journals.

Baum: Oh, yes.

Chall: Yes. To bring back lists of--

Baum: Lists of journals.

Chall: Lists of lists. Always we had, we were making lists. Things got quite a bit more sophisticated as time went on, in terms of getting our material out, with proper kinds of letters and—I think we're about out of tape—.

[End tape 6, side A; begin side B]

Baum: --publicizing our oral histories. We also had lots of lists of manuscript libraries, and what they specialized in. And then we would send the libraries a notice when we finished an oral history that was in the field of their specialty.

Chall: Right.

Baum: We got quite a few orders, too. We'd get quite a few orders from those libraries for the oral histories that seemed relevant to their collection.

Chall: [tape interruption] What I wanted to talk to you about in this particular period of time, I'm not sure just when they both happened, but in my notes, you approached Lawton Kennedy to design a brochure for the Oral History Association. And then I noticed that Lawton Kennedy had also done some printing—Lawton and Alfred Kennedy—this lovely little pamphlet, *Oral History at the Bancroft Library*. It doesn't have a date on it, but it has, it's very well put together. Now, that one that you're looking at over there, looks the same, but I don't think it--

Baum: Yes, this is about the catalogue.

Chall: This is about the catalogue [an announcement of our first catalogue]. And it's very good, but it doesn't have, as far as I can tell, it doesn't say anything about the fact that Lawton Kennedy had designed it. This probably came out in 1980. It belongs to the Oral History, the catalogue. This [second] little one looks like it on the outside, with a picture of the Greeks talking to each other, it's a beautiful little piece, and it's all about oral history and the techniques, and financing, and then it has great lists of people whom we've done. So I looked at it and realized it probably was done in the 1970s, because it has a Negro political leaders, that was done later in the seventies. It has Earl Warren. It has Zellerbach Fund, and we got a grant from the Zellerbach

Family Fund for initial interviews on the arts and the community in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1971. So this one here had to have been done after 1975, I would guess. But it was earlier than that [1969] that you had had a note in your monthly log that you had gone to Lawton Kennedy to design something for the Oral History Association, not for ROHO.

- Baum: Mm-hmm. I can't remember going to—well, Lawton—I can't remember about Lawton Kennedy and the Oral History Association. But Lawton Kennedy was the Bancroft Library's printer, and probably the most famous fine printer in San Francisco. Of course, we had an oral history with him, and Ruth Teiser and Catherine Harroun did those, all the printing series. And yes, he just did beautiful, beautiful work.
- Chall: So that's a beautiful little brochure that--
- Baum: Isn't that lovely? And by the time our catalogue came out, I think he had died.
- Chall: Oh. Well, see, what's the date of that catalogue? 1980.
- Baum: Must be, if it ended--
- Chall: And this one may have been just—yes, this must have been in the late seventies. This one with all the names in it. Possibly before he—maybe he didn't do that one—the catalogue announcement.
- Baum: No, I would not think so.
- Chall: Maybe he didn't do the announcement of our catalogue, but he did this one, Oral History at the Bancroft Library, he did that one. [See following pages.]
- Baum: Yes, he did that before. And it was--
- Chall: It was beautifully done, and it's well written, and it has all these names on the back, which are so impressive.
- Baum: Yes. And it was a period—I mean, we later, I think we redid that somehow, and we had to change all the names, because by then, people didn't know who these outstanding individuals were. As time passes--
- Chall: Yes, that's right.
- Baum: Lawton Kennedy, and in here [Catalogue I], he was still alive, because we put a death date on them if they die. So he hadn't died by the time we did this catalogue. Oh, they were all alive, and of course, they're all dead now. Well, naturally. Andrew Hoyem, it says in process, and it's still in process. [laughs]

1972 ROHO Brochure

SOME REPRESENTATIVE MEMOIRS AND MEMOIR SERIES AND THEIR SPONSORS

Earl Warren Era in California—National Endowment for the Humanities, The Friends of The Bancroft Library, and matching gifts from individual donors
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REGIONAL ORAL HISTORY OFFICE
THE BANCROFT LIBRARY
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oral history at the Bancroft Library

Oral history is a modern research technique for preserving knowledge of historical events as recounted by participants. For nearly two decades The Bancroft Library's oral history office has been tape recording the memoirs of people who have contributed significantly to the development of the West and of the nation.

In the past those who took part in or observed important events wrote their accounts in journals, diaries, or letters. Such writings as the diaries of the Gold Rush miners, and, earlier, Abigail Adams' letters to her husband, Cotton Mather's journal, and Pepys' diary form the basis for much of our understanding of their times. But in this century the writing of personal accounts has declined and the kinds of written exchanges that once preceded important decisions have been replaced by conferences and telephone calls.

Now, however, in the recorded conversations of the oral history interview scholars of future generations can find both the account of events and the dynamic quality of the ancient oral tradition.

THE ORAL HISTORY MEMOIR. An oral history memoir is a recorded and transcribed series of interviews designed to preserve the recollections and knowledge of a person who has played a significant role in or observed important events. The transcriptions are reviewed by the memoirist, retyped, indexed, bound with photographs and illustrative materials, and placed in The Bancroft Library and other research collections. The memoirist receives a copy. Many participants enrich their memoirs by donating their personal and business papers.

A narrator may elect to open his interview to research immediately or to restrict it for a specified time. The Bancroft Library safeguards and administers the use of the memoir and other materials according to his wishes.

USES OF ORAL HISTORY. Most importantly, oral history forms a primary source of information that scholars can examine and evaluate in their research. Also, oral history memoirs can inform current leaders of the traditions and practices of their predecessors. Often memoirs are used to enlighten a specialized public; for example, *Printing as a Performing Art*, a publication of The Book Club of California (1970), is composed of selections from The Bancroft Library's interviews with fine printers. Finally, an oral history may serve as the impetus and first draft for a published autobiography, as Kathleen Norris' did.

Because it is primary material, oral history is not intended to present the final, verified, and complete account of events. Rather, it is the narrator's view, sometimes recounted in partisanship and passion, sometimes recollected in tranquility, always as perceived by someone deeply involved. It is vivid, immediate, and irreplaceable.

THE ORIGINS OF ORAL HISTORY. Contemporary oral history came into being with the development of the tape recorder. In 1948 Allan Nevins, historian and writer, established at Columbia University the first oral history office in order "to obtain from the lips and papers of living Americans who have led significant lives a fuller record of their participation in the political, economic, and cultural life of the last sixty years."

But the concept of oral history is much older. Thucydides, in the fifth century B.C., is said to have interviewed men returning from the Peloponnesian Wars, later including in his works their words as original oral histories. When Hubert Howe Bancroft began his studies of the history of the West almost a century ago, he trained his researchers to interview the pioneers and write down their words by hand. These accounts later formed part of the original Bancroft Collection, and they have been in continual use ever since.

The Regional Oral History Office of The Bancroft Library carries on this farsighted program of Hubert Howe Bancroft. By 1972 the Office had completed almost two hundred memoirs; 132 manuscript repositories throughout the world hold copies of one or more of the memoirs.

THE FINANCING OF ORAL HISTORY. While The Bancroft Library supports the administrative functions of the Regional Oral History Office, all memoirs must be funded by outside gifts and grants. These are tax-deductible. Funds for specific memoirs or memoir series come from a variety of sources: foundations, industries and businesses, learned societies and professional groups, museums, alumni associations, University departments, friends and colleagues of the memoirists, and individual donors.

- Chall: Is it? What happened to it?
- Baum: Wonder what will happen to it.
- Chall: I don't remember that one in our--.
- Baum: He had been turning out stuff, winning awards, and getting his—and Ruth had already interviewed him a number of times, and the interviews were put away. We were just going to finish it then. Hoyem, no, he's not listed here, so we haven't finished it.
- Chall: Well, let's see. Onward? We were talking about the deposit of our manuscripts in other depositories. In the 1968-1969 annual report, you made a special note of this, about the expansion of availability of ROHO interviews through deposit in other manuscript depositories, and about publishing notices of completion in various learned journals. So you say that 217 manuscripts were deposited in forty-eight different depositories. "Now there are 362 available in sixty-six depositories." And you were reimbursed \$6,132 to cover the reproduction.
- Baum: Mm-hmm.
- Chall: So--
- Baum: And that was a number—at some point I always included that in the annual report, and I was very proud of how many—and that does not include all the number of copies that are made for people's family or something else. This is just manuscript depositories.
- Chall: That's right. Then you include projects you've started. That's the wine industry, we talked about Earl Warren. And the San Francisco Bay Maritime History Series—the Crowley Launch and Tug Company. So that finally got on the road.
- Baum: Yes, yes.
- Chall: You wrote that there was a substantial deposit of papers. Then you wrote that you had a need for development and administrative funds, that fundraising is important, and you needed money to start new series—that seed starters, you called them, like Cruess for the wine industry, and Newton Drury. You said that just having one of those, interviews helped you start the series. That was the seed money.
- Baum: Right. Newton Drury started the Earl Warren project.
- Chall: Right, and Cruess started the--

- Baum: Wine series.
- Chall: The wine series. And you needed that kind of money. Also you said that you needed money for overtime costs, because it always took more time to raise the money, to fundraise. Finally this is the first time I've seen in your reports that you needed funds for professional growth.
- Baum: Mm-hmm.
- Chall: And what did you mean by that?
- Baum: Probably to attend workshops, or to attend conferences. I guess it had slowly seeped into my brain that all the other departments of the Bancroft Library sent their head of the department or someone to that professional organization, and that ROHO didn't get sent anywhere. We had to pay our own way.
- Chall: I guess gradually that we--
- Baum: We did, we began to get some funding, yes. It was--. And then I think I mentioned, we didn't use it for one person, we divided it up among whomever wanted to go.
- Chall: So this was in your 1968-1969 annual report. I'm just wondering whether you finally began to get money after Dr. Hart came in [1970].
- Baum: And I can't remember the time frame of that.
- Chall: Because it probably took a long time before you got it.
- You then, as you usually did, you listed prospects, and there was of course Pat Brown and Donald McLaughlin to start a mining series. This was your seed-money idea. Carl Went to start a series on California agriculture. He was a wine person. And then Walter Haas, but I didn't connect Walter Haas with any particular series, and I don't know why he was in there. I mean, he was there because he was a well-known person in California, in San Francisco--
- Baum: He's just listed as a starter, but not a starter of what.
- Chall: No, I don't see a start with—I didn't see him there.
- Baum: Because I can't remember if--
- Chall: I think we did Walter Haas.
- Baum: We did do Walter Haas, yes. And we did a—oh, I know, we did a number of Jewish persons, and maybe Haas was the first. I don't know how they got funded, but they did not go through the--

- Chall: Was he done for athletic, for business, later on? Because he—now, I don't know which one, Haas, he wasn't the one with the baseball--? I think it was his son.
- Baum: We've got Peter Haas. [both looking through catalogues and murmuring] Oh, Walter Haas, Sr...
- Chall: They were well-known Jewish philanthropists, and--
- Baum: Yeah.
- Chall: Elise Haas was interviewed by Harriet Nathan.
- Baum: And—no, no, here's Walter Haas, Sr. Then Harriet did that too.
- Chall: Yes, she did, I think I remember that. She did both of them, Walter Haas too?
- Baum: Yes. And they both have no donors listed.
- Chall: Aha. I think that was—they paid for them themselves. But I do remember Walter Haas, Sr., just fussing a great deal over his.
- Baum: Well, Walter Haas, what did he say? He had a crutch word like people nowadays say "you know, you know, you know," until you could die. Well, Walter Haas had a crutch word, and I can't remember what it was, but it might have just been "well." It was a very small one. And we realized as we transcribed that he had this word maybe twice in every sentence, or not quite. It was an old-fashioned, what was it? Well, anyway, so we said, "Well, we'll take them out, but we won't take them all out," because it was very appropriate to his age and so on. So we took out maybe two-thirds of the crutch word, whatever it was. And do you know, when he got his finished, bound volume and he'd already of course corrected it and all that--
- Chall: And he saw that--
- Baum: And he saw those things, he said, "Why, I don't say that!" Anyhow, he didn't want them in there, and so he said, "I will pay you to retype this with all those out." [laughter]
- Chall: I remember that, I remember! We did it.
- Baum: We thought we'd done the right thing by leaving enough in to show that he used that word, but not overwhelmed.
- Chall: That was ROHO's system, but--
- Baum: Yes.

- Chall: Yes. I think we also had one of the vintners, who objected to the way he sounded, because he had an accent. Remember, one of the wine people?
- Baum: There was one wine person who, Louis Martini, I think, had a strong accent—well, you can't type an accent, but the way he put his words together.
- Chall: Yes. I remember he wanted his redone, too.
- Baum: Yes. Some of these people, they just can't realize that they're not just paying for a writer. "As told to." Louis Martini... [looking through catalogue, pause]
- Chall: All of our interviews—I mean, we had enough interviews that would occasionally create problems for us.
- Baum: Oh, we were always having some kind of problem. Yes, here's Louis Martini, wine maker. Interviewed by Lois Stone and Ruth Teiser. And I think Lois did the interview, which was very choppy. And Ruth, when he didn't like it, Ruth re-edited it, and she changed some of the wording so that it didn't sound so peculiar, so Italian instead of English--
- Chall: Too bad.
- Baum: Yes. But she did a wonderful job, and people who have read it said, "Oh, you just caught Louis exactly! Oh, I can just hear him reading it." So somehow, Ruth did it so skillfully, you couldn't tell that a certain number of those things had been changed so. He didn't want to sound like an Italian.
- Chall: I remember that one.
- Baum: Yes. And I think we always—I'd have to read the introduction—but usually if we did something like that, we told that we did it in the interview history. Very politely, of course.
- Chall: You couldn't have done it to the Haas one afterwards, but you might have been able to do it to the [Martini].
- Baum: Oh, yes. Because we wanted, we always wanted to put the clue in front of the researcher of how this was done, and if there were any changes made, who asked for them, or whatever. Well, they don't do that any more. They don't have any interview histories or anything. There's not this commitment to how this was done, so that the researcher can know all the clues to--
- Chall: Well, of course, we're old-fashioned, we don't accept it [omitting the interview history.]
- Baum: Yes.

- Chall: That year [1968-1969] you raised \$52,487 in outside funds. So your outside funds are getting bigger. [And 1967-1968, \$12,873 were from outside.] And there's a list of the interviewers and clerical staff. We've gone through most of those before. Marjorie Prince. Gloria Dolan, you remember Gloria.
- Baum: Oh, yes.
- Chall: She was a musician. She was a pianist.
- Baum: She taught piano, yes.
- Chall: Yes, and played piano, and we often went to her concerts.
- Baum: And Gloria—oh.
- Chall: She had a different name when she was--
- Baum: Dolan.
- Chall: --that we knew her as, but she had another name.
- Baum: She had another name she used for her concerts.
- Chall: Yes, she did, Robin something.
- Baum: Oh, yes.
- Chall: And Jane Burton I don't remember.
- Baum: Oh, I do, because I still see her. But she was only very briefly a transcriber, I think.
- Chall: And then Gwen Logan, do you remember Gwen Logan?
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: She was a musician, she played the guitar in a Catholic church, and I think did other things.
- Baum: Gwen Logan was—she was the ex-wife of a professor at Cal. She had a lot of children, more than I did, like maybe eight. She was practically without funds.
- Chall: We had a few women like that, whose husbands left them a little high and dry, usually after they got their PhDs.
- Baum: Yes, right.

- Chall: But I do remember her. And then Wendy Won is mentioned. Wendy stayed with us for a long time.
- Baum: How long? Wendy was with us a long time.
- Chall: Yes, she went from I think a basic clerical right to the head of the office.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: Now, then, again, [1968-1969 annual report] you were looking forward to possible series. One of them was I-House, International House, which you did succeed in doing. Another one was genetics; I don't know that we ever got genetics. Another one was Harry Bridges; we never succeeded there. Agriculture, we talked about that, we never got it quite, just pure agriculture. And then Negro history--we got something. And then for the first time, BART is mentioned, the BART transportation system. So you must have thought something about that.
- Baum: Yes, we worked on that for a while, but I can't remember. Some of these things, I feel like they're not dead yet. But I've been gone—I should just get my old files out and start from where we were and keep going. [laughs]
- Chall: And now we come to 1970, which is a good year. January, James Hart became director of the Bancroft Library. In March, you were appointed to the Committee on Oral History of the Society of American Archivists. And in July, *CU News* reported that Ruth Teiser and Catherine Harroun were authors of "Printing as a Performing Art." And I don't know where that was published.
- Baum: Oh, "Printing as a Performing Art," it was a--
- Chall: It was an article that they--
- Baum: It was published by the Book Club, I believe, and it was fine printed, and it was a beautiful little book. It printed only 100 copies or however many the Book Club, their members get.
- Chall: So they're precious.
- Baum: Very precious, very beautiful, and it used excerpts from the interviews of the fine printers that Ruth and Catherine had interviewed. It was a beautiful little book. I wonder where my book is. They gave me one; I had one.
- Chall: You must have it somewhere.
- Baum: Oh.

Chall: In 1971—this is from Willa’s folders—in February, the Zellerbach Family Fund gave us a grant for the initial interviews about the Arts in the Community, San Francisco Bay Area. And you claimed that it would supplement interviews on books and fine printing, Arts, Architecture, and Photography. Then this is the first time that I noticed, that we began to keep records of who came in to visit ROHO as guests or to make inquiries. It was a special book.

Baum: Yes, we had a special visitors book, and that was because one of the things the Bancroft Library wanted to report on each year were how many people used them, used the library or called on the staff. It was just to indicate how much work they were doing. And so they asked us for that information, and we didn’t have it. So--

Chall: Ah. Actually, that’s when it started.

Baum: So we started the scrapbook, and we should have done it before, because we spent lots of time with researchers coming in to know what we had with this or that, and we’d find them books and show them things, and in fact, sometimes if we were interviewing in the subjects they were interested in at that time, why, we would add some questions for their research, too. So we were always trying to work with the researchers.

Chall: Well, it’s a very interesting book. It’s just taken an old scrapbook, a red sort of leather-type cover, but sometimes the person [usually the staff] will write who came and when, what day. I see this beautiful handwriting, Marj Prince had beautiful handwriting. Sometimes it was just a little piece of paper, a little scrap of paper, and it would be pasted in. Sometimes it was a phone call, sometimes it was a visitor. It’s just full of all of this information. So that’s the reason that that was started.

Baum: We wanted to get—a lot of researchers—I mean, sometimes we wanted to be able to get back to people too, because we knew that somebody had been in last year to ask about something, and now we have something on it. And we wanted to call them back and say, “We’ve now got an interview that deals with your subject.”

Chall: That all makes sense. Well, we used that book. But it’s fascinating—just to look at it. Willa, we have reached the 1972 monthly logs, and I think we’ll leave it at that. Because I have 1972 and 1973 for next time, and then after that just a pile of ephemera to go through.

Baum: Okay.

[End audiofile 11, end of session]

Interview with Willa Baum
 Interviewed by Malca Chall
 Interview 7: March 9, 2005]
 [Begin audiofile 12 (tape 7, side A)]

Chall: I got a lot of information out of your monthly logs, because they were very detailed. I'm starting now in 1972 in your monthly logs, and I have picked out some logs that looked more interesting than others. In October of '72, we now had the Earl Warren project, got it in '69, and you wrote that there was much work to be done with the campus research office with accounting, figuring indirect costs, the title to rental equipment, cost sharing, and the financial reports to NEH [National Endowment for the Humanities]. You said that grants take up a great deal of administrative, nonproductive time with a lot of paperwork. By that time, we were sending proposals to NEH and Rockefeller and, oh, foundations all over, but it was a lot of work. Do you want to comment on the—I guess the relationship between work and--

Baum: And paperwork? [laughs]

Chall: The paperwork, and the rewards.

Baum: Yes, I think it was before 1969 that we made our first grant application to NEH, because we didn't get the first one. We had to redo it. Now, writing a grant proposal is a very time-consuming thing. You have to—well, let's see, one of the things is you have to have advisors and names that strike a chord with the people who read it. And so all those things mean going to all these different people and talking to them about the proposal, and getting them to sign on that they would be a named advisor. And a number of those people were useful; a number of them were just names. But, I thought the whole operation was not useful in that we had always had the tradition that if somebody could help us in a subject, we felt we had a right to call and say, "We're a university project and we want to talk to you about this and that." They always talked to us. So we had access to the faculty, and to even beyond the faculty, anyhow. So all this formality in getting them to write a letter that they support the grant and this and that, this was all make-work, and it was a lot of work.

Now, let's see. We had to do a budget. And the budgets were ridiculous, because on the whole, you had no idea what was going to happen or how much it was going to cost. And so you'd multiply how much does a reel of tape cost, and multiply by approximately how many interview sessions did you think you'd get in this year, or—they were usually, I guess they were usually just one year.

Chall: Yes, well, at least, I think sometimes we had two-year grants, but we still had to do it in segments.

- Baum: Yes. Let's see, what else? So—oh, and then we had to work out all these costs--
- Chall: There was cost sharing, I--
- Baum: Cost sharing, that's not the word they used. Indirect costs. And the university had figured out with the granting agency, and each one was different, how much they charged on everything you spent. Well, that was a little mathematical thing, had no relation to anything, except that really did take money. So if you got a \$10,000 grant, \$2,000 of it or more would go into indirect charges, so it didn't get anywhere.
- Well, I used to, I'm sure, when you figure the number of little offices like ours who were busy writing these grant reports and how many hours they took, and they mailed it in—oh, and once you got it done, then it had to go through the--
- Chall: There was a campus office--
- Baum: --campus grants office, and a whole bunch of people over there added up and subtracted and did all these things, so that I'm sure that the amount of money that was spent on this grant proposal was so much. Then your chances of getting the grant were not very much. That a lot more money was being spent across the United States for these foundations and things than ever came out to be put on work.
- Chall: Yes, and a lot of people got work as a result of it, however. [laughs] In offices, just doing all this paperwork.
- Baum: Oh, yes, there were whole new professions—of grant writers. A grant writer wasn't anybody but somebody who's learned to know all those—the catch words, the in style, which changed from year to year.
- Chall: Yes. But they were very important, particularly to a lot of agencies that were 501(c)(3)'s. Fortunately, we had the university.
- Baum: Why do you mean, important?
- Chall: Well, because a lot of charitable institutions had to employ people who could write grants in order to get money. And it was—[teacups clanking]
- Baum: So they were a WPA project—and those persons, every one of them had to know enough about the subject that they were writing about that they would have been qualified to do the research. And so instead of writing grants, if you had just given them so many—four grant writers, except that they'd do research instead of write grants, they could have done twice as much of whatever the research was that you wanted to do.

Chall: We had to do the research and write the grants. Took a lot of time and, figuring out exactly what it was we wanted to do, and why. We had to explain why, and I remember the first time we approached, I think it was NEH, with the idea of, it was the women political leaders, and we called them—I can't remember now, I'll have to go back into—oh, yes, we called them the “solitary victors,” because—I don't know exactly what the reason was, but I think maybe Chita came up with this idea. Well, NEH turned it down. They said that was not the proper terminology for this particular project. So then we called them “women in politics,” from 1920 to 1965, and we had it focused. And then eventually, it took a couple of years, eventually they accepted it. Before that, we were trying to get money from NEH, I think, for the suffragist project, and we couldn't get any money there, but Chita had contacted Rockefeller [Foundation] over the years, and they gave us money without the strings tied. And no indirect costs, none of this. I mean, they just said, “You want \$10,000,” or whatever it was, and they sent it. And there was no problem with all the bookkeeping that went with it. It was a great--

Baum: In the suffragists, if we're jumping to that subject--

Chall: That's right, yes.

Baum: When you write a grant proposal, then it goes out for peer review. Peer review is sent to whomever they have as lists of scholars, that know about that subject. And I know I reviewed things for them too, and you have to send in when they ask you to, you send in what you know about [the subject] and whether you're willing to review. So I read quite a few of those.

But, on the peer review—you run into peer review, especially on a limited subject like suffragists, I mean, it's a small subject, but there are people who are dedicated to it. There were probably a number of scholars, women scholars usually, who were working on suffragists. And in a way, more than in a way, they were your competitors. And it was not to their advantage for you to get a grant to interview those people. Now, in the case of the suffragists, Chita had gotten to know these women, who were living at the Women's Party headquarters, or nearby, and they were all working very hard on the Equal Rights Amendment. Alice Paul had defined for everyone that they would not work on any oral histories or any other digressive things, they were to put all their effort on working on getting the ERA in. They told anybody who asked them to be interviewed, they said, “No, we're working on the ERA, we're not going to do it.”

But they had made a commitment to Chita, that she would work on the ERA for them, and she did. She came back to Washington, and she lobbied all those congressman, senators. And, when it passed, and it only passed out of the Congress, then it had to go to all the states, that they would be interviewed. And so, they were going to stick to their rules. But, when we sent in the grant proposal, all those women scholars who'd also asked and [were told] they

wouldn't be interviewed, all wrote back that there was no sense granting this, because those women would not be interviewed.

At that point, Alice Paul was elderly, very elderly. Chita just simply, she went on her own nickel, went back to Washington, went back to stay at Alice Paul's house. She did the interviews, without--

Chall: Without funding.

Baum: Without funding. And I said, "We'll pay you if we can." And that's when the nice young grant funder from Rockefeller came in and said they would fund that, and they did.

Chall: Well, you know, it was interesting, because in October of '72, we asked Albert Lepawsky to be the principal investigator for Women in Politics, Unit II: 1920 to 1960. I don't know what we meant by Unit II. We had sent a grant proposal to NEH, and submitted it to the campus research office. That was in October of '72. In December of '72, you reported that the proposal on the suffragists had been turned down by NEH, and then you wrote, "We will attempt to salvage it, as the chief interviewees, Alice Paul, Mabel Vernon, and Jeannette Rankin, have all agreed to participate." So we were always a little ahead of the curve somehow, and it was great, when Rockefeller in April '73, that's a few months later, actually, approved it.

Baum: I'm sure we interviewed most of those people right then.

Chall: Oh, we did. I went down [Carmel Valley] and I interviewed Jeannette Rankin a couple of times, and then Hannah Josephson came out and interviewed her. By this time, we had our money. Also, according to the monthly logs, you were concerned with a proposal for China Scholars, and you submitted a project proposal to interview three eminent scholars of Chinese studies to the Henry Luce Foundation. Rosemary Levenson was to do it. I don't know whether we ever received any funding for that.

Baum: We did do a series called China Scholars, and I can't remember who funded it. I don't think we got it from the Luce Foundation.

Chall: I don't think...that doesn't...

Baum: I knew somebody from the Luce Foundation, and China Scholars... [looking through catalogue, tape interruption] We had for some reason started doing—we always back into these things by some unexpected—[laughs]

Chall: I think Rosemary knew some of the China scholars, because she'd been in China.

Baum: Yes, that's probably, but--

- Chall: I think so. I think she actually—wasn't there a famous China scholar who was considered radical by—yes, he was considered a radical. He helped to “lose” China for us. Didn't she--
- Baum: Oh, Service.
- Chall: Yes, John Service. I think Rosemary interviewed John Service.
- Baum: Oh, yes. Jack Service, we called him, and his wife.
- Chall: And his wife [Caroline], yes, that's right.
- Baum: And she did a long one, but I think we'd worked on China scholars before that. [looking through papers, pause] [tape interruption] Yes, they're--
- Chall: Is that Elizabeth Huff?
- Baum: Yes, Elizabeth Huff. And she was interviewed in 1976. [reads from Catalogue] “Underwritten by friends and colleagues of Elizabeth Huff.”
- Chall: Oh, and who did that?
- Baum: Oh, Rosemary. So you see, they're sprinkled around. But we did put out a listing called China Scholars, that we would give to researchers, who wanted to know what we had in the subject. Oh, here's one we started very early. Before we were getting money. 1960, Ferdinand Lessing.
- Chall: Oh, my. And how did you—is there any money coming from that?
- Baum: No, no, that's before we got money. I mean, we--
- Chall: I see, the university's \$15,000 a year.
- Baum: That's right. And Ferdinand Lessing was a very famous linguist. Irene Prescott did that. We only did I think one interview—let's see, it's listed as seventy pages. And then he died.
- Chall: Yes, that's about two hours.
- Baum: Yes. And so that was like a start, but it really was his childhood, which was in Germany. He was a great German Chinese scholar, learning Greek, Latin, and Russian, at the University of Berlin. [laughs] That's about where we got. But it really gave us a toe-in, because he was a very significant person, and we--
- Chall: And was he on the campus?
- Baum: Yes.

- Chall: I see, so that gave you a shoe-in on the campus for the China--
- Baum: Yes, and he's in the University of California listing. I don't know how come we did him. I know there was a way, because I can almost see that we had a connection. Later, I went to visit his wife, and we finished up what little bit we had. And we're pleased to have it. [laughs]
- Chall: Yes.
- Baum: Now, wait a minute, Now, what was our original question here? It was something about—no, it was writing about grants.
- Chall: Oh, yes, writing grants. That's what we were discussing.
- Baum: And I was saying that it took a lot of time, and it took a lot of—oh, and another problem about grants, which didn't surface immediately—[crash! Willa is cutting a piece of cheese and dropped the knife I guess] that will be interesting on the tape! [laughter] We just had to write a grant proposal and turn it in, through the grants office. Actually it went through the Bancroft Library, and then through the library, and then to the UC grants office. But they didn't have anything to do with what we applied [for] whatever.
- Well, eventually it seemed that the university was keeping track of how many grant proposals went in, and who could send them. So if the Bancroft Library had a proposal that was more interesting, which they always were, because they were big proposals always, the Bancroft's getting funding for cataloguing or something, we weren't allowed to turn in one.
- Chall: Oh, I see, to the same foundation. It was sending it to the same foundation?
- Baum: Yes, I think that's right.
- Chall: That was it, because we couldn't—San Francisco Foundation was just about out of our [range of possibility]. We couldn't ask them, because the Bancroft Library was always getting funds from the San Francisco Foundation. Eventually, though, we got money to do the three women who had started the-
- Baum: Oh, Save the Bay [Save San Francisco Bay Association].
- Chall: Save the Bay. And that's because Kay [Katherine] Kerr asked them to give the money for this project. So we got it through her. They funded, I don't know exactly how it worked, but that was how we got money from the San Francisco Foundation.
- Baum: Right. So we always, we always had added problems in getting into the—we couldn't ask donors without going through the campus development office,

because often the same donors they had in mind to give a building or something substantial.

Chall: Yes, that really cut down on what we could do for a time, or where we could go, and there weren't too many places where we could go.

Baum: Couldn't apply to granting foundations, if anybody else was interested in them.

Chall: That's right. It seems to me that that came about in the late, maybe eighties, or early nineties. I don't remember when I was doing the Save the Bay women [1985-1986]. But it was later, it became quite intense, the competition.

Baum: Our point always was, and I kept raising it with the development office, that if some donor or foundation gave us some funding—and we didn't usually just apply out of the thin air—we always had a reason, we had connections there, we had some reason why we thought they would want this grant proposal. If they were pleased with the work we did, they would then be pleased with the university and might be more likely to grant the other. Well, I think the development office thought that was not true. [laughter]

Chall: Well, you tried.

In [July log] 1973, you listed that Jacqueline Parker was employed to edit and complete her interview with Valeska Bary. Valeska Bary, we put her among the Social History projects. So can you—this was another way of getting somebody to come in [and work on a project.] She'd already done, I think, most of the interview, hadn't she?

Baum: Valeska Bary was--

Chall: She was a very important woman we did get this way.

Baum: Yes, yes.

Chall: And then I think Jackie Parker didn't stay on our staff. She was teaching someplace in some other university.

Baum: Yes. [looking through catalogue] Oh, well, she [Valeska Bary] worked in the suffrage movement. She worked in the War Labor Policies—oh, in World War I.

Chall: It was a good interview about and for women.

Baum: [reading] "California State Department of Social Welfare, the National Recovery Administration, New Deal politics," interviewed 1972 and '73 by

Jacqueline Parker. It doesn't say—apparently we didn't get any special funding, or at least--

Baum: I'm sure funding went into it. Jackie was assistant professor of social welfare, Virginia Commonwealth University. So that's where she may have been teaching at that time. She was teaching in different places over the years—and I can't remember whether we had her do some other interviews or not. We always were—over the years, I still would be working on something. She had lots of ideas of things to do, and she was eager to do them, with or without pay. She was a real researcher.

Wait a minute, that might be—I'm waiting for some young man's luggage to come. [tape interruption]

Chall: There was one interesting sentence on your [December] 1972 monthly log, that you were preparing footnote—or actually setting up footnote and bibliography forms for oral history interviews. [much clanking of teacups]

Baum: Oh, you worked on that, didn't you?

Chall: Yes, I did. It took quite a while. We realized, I think, that people were using our oral histories a lot, and they needed to--

Baum: Yes, people were supposed to, if they wanted to use one of our oral histories, and it said so in the front of each volume, they were supposed to write to our office and ask permission. Then we sent them back [an answer]. I think this was your assignment often, was to check what they wanted to quote--

Chall: Yes, that's right.

Baum: --and see if indeed they'd quoted it correctly, and if there were any restrictions on quoting it. And if all was okay, then we'd send them back a letter, I think—I don't know if you wrote it or I wrote it, but anyway, it gave them permission to use it. Then we wanted to include how to footnote it. Because the footnotes we began to see were coming out in every different sort of way. There was no standard way how to footnote an oral history.

And I can remember we worked on that quite a bit, and then we printed up a sheet that had about three different ways to quote a footnote--

Chall: Yes, depending upon how they were going to use it. Yes, that's right, and they were required to use it that way.

Baum: Supposedly, they were required; as a matter of fact, there was no way to require them.

Chall: No. But at least we had set up a standard.

Baum: We did want to. We tried to establish standards in oral history, so the different offices had more or less the same systems.

Chall: This would also give us a clue to who was using our material, and then if a book came out, we would go and look at it. With *Cadillac Desert* I remember writing to the author, whom I did know at that time, to congratulate him, and he sent me an autographed copy. But we eventually got quite a list, a bookshelf full of books that had used oral history, ours and others.

Baum: Yes. And in the annual reports, eventually we started to list them.

[End tape 7, side A; begin side B]

Baum: Yes, in our annual reports, there was a page or two on uses of our oral histories, and they included the books that used it, and I remember several were plays. Listed what plays used them, and where they were presented. That was part of, we were always trying to justify that what we did really was useful for research, or people used them. [laughs]

Chall: Well, now, I'm now going to skip over to a couple annual reports that go beyond where we are now, but I thought that it would be nice to sort of summarize ROHO's progress before we go into something else. The annual reports of '85-'86, '86-'87, '96-'97, and '97-'98, give us a spread of little more than a decade, and they're a decade beyond where we are now. We're finishing in 1993. In your annual report, you always had the list of completed oral histories, and the number of employees, and the volumes deposited in libraries to date, and our expenditures for the year. So, let me compare 1985 to 1997, although I do have all of them.

Baum: Oh, and the annual reports are there.

Chall: Yes, right. But this is what I've put down. In the year 1985-'86, we completed fifty-nine interviews in twenty-one volumes. In 1997-98, we completed 118 interviews in forty-seven volumes. That's quite a spread, almost twice. Now, the number of employees in 1985-86 was thirty-eight, with twelve occasional. And in 1997-98, there were thirty-three, with six occasional. Occasionals, that's how you used the word.

Baum: Yes, people who came in to do one thing, like Jackie Parker, who did Valeska Bary.

Chall: Right.

Baum: And those numbers were all these—every interview took at least three years to complete, and so we just listed it when it was finished. So the major part of it might have been done in a previous year.

- Chall: Right. Now, volumes deposited in libraries. In 1985-86, there were 6,156 in 581 libraries. In 1997, there were 9,502 in 800-plus libraries.
- Baum: And you realize that's cumulative. That's not year by year, but the total for ever and ever.
- Chall: Yes. That's right. It got very impressive. The numbers just kept growing in these decades that--
- Baum: Yes. That was again the same as listing what had been finished. It was an effort to show that they were useful and they were going somewhere.
- Chall: Yes. Well. 9,502 in 800-plus libraries, that's very impressive. That's all of our oral history volumes.
- Baum: And these didn't include individuals, because lots of people ordered copies of their own oral history for their family or something. So we sold more, and we sold them at a price per page, plus binding--
- Chall: Plus pictures.
- Baum: --and shipping, yes. And so I don't know if they made any money or not, but they were meant to just come out even.
- Chall: So when you say these 9,502, they were just libraries, they weren't the individuals.
- Baum: Right.
- Chall: Now, expenditures. In 1985-86, \$341,320, and approximately a decade later, it was \$524,807. So even though we never did get very much money from the university, I don't know that it changed a lot, we always, we had tremendously big budgets. We were working with a lot of money.
- Baum: Yes. Let's see, that's half a million dollars.
- Chall: Right. Does that startle you? [chuckling]
- Baum: No, no, I always was astonished--
- Chall: It is astonishing, isn't it, when you think about it?
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: Now, then all the interviews completed to date, 1985-86 there were 825. A decade later, there were 1,565.

- Baum: So again, it was always hard to decide what's an interview. Our interviews were complete—one person. And they might be just a one-session interview, or it might be a twenty- or thirty-session interview. One person. Like, Dr. Lowdermilk was two great big volumes.
- Chall: Yes, and Paul Taylor was three!
- Baum: Oh, yes. So those numbers are not comparable exactly.
- Chall: That's true, except that it just--
- Baum: Each one we felt was somebody you had to deal with, you made agreements with, you had correspondence with, you had much you're working with--
- Chall: Hand-holding some of them for years and years, like who was it, one of my sanitary engineers [Wilfred Langelier] who wouldn't give it up until I guess he was ready to die, and he finally gave us his interview and allowed somebody to write a flowery, he thought, introduction to it.
- In 1986-87, this is the first time I noticed [you discussed] computer use, and this is probably our first computers. We got two Zendex computers, and one printer, and you said they were almost all obsolete.
- Baum: Yes. [laughs]
- Chall: But they were all gifts of Robert Livermore, and he was a great donor--
- Baum: Oh, that's right, Robert Livermore. He was a member of the Friends of the Bancroft Library, and the famed Livermore family.
- Chall: And he gave us these--
- Baum: And at first, we had to share the Zendexes with the Mark Twain Project. They didn't have a computer, and--
- Chall: Dear me. [several telephones ring, tape interruption] This was the beginning of our use, however, of computers, but I remember the Zendex took a lot of time. It was always undergoing problems.
- Baum: Oh, those computers, it's the same as writing grants. I think that the time spent on working with it in one way or another that was not doing work was more than whatever it saved. And of course, as time went on, that got better, but for the first five or so years, the time spent on those computers was terrible.
- Chall: I remember how upset you were whenever you looked back into that room where they were, and saw the fellow who always was there to handle errors and problems. There were two or three clericals looking over his shoulder,

trying to figure it all out. And so it was his time, and their time, nothing was being done except just studying complex computer problems. And you felt that money was just going out the window, into a black hole.

Baum: I don't think you should ever start with new technology. Be one of the last ones started, because the first ones are going to spend a lot of technological time--

Chall: Particularly when they were almost obsolete at that point.

Baum: Yes.

Chall: But as you say, it got much better.

In 1996-1997 annual report—this is the time when we were having an expenditure of a half million dollars, you wrote that we were discussing strategic ideas for reducing costs, and they were: eliminate the chapter subheads, eliminate final typing, hire an assistant editor to proofread, have the interviewer edit the transcripts on the screen. Can you remember how we used to fuss around with that?

Baum: And yet--

Chall: Trying to save costs. I don't know that we did any of those things. Eventually, I think they did change the chapter headings. We tried various things, like running on chapter headings, a run-on of what was in the chapter [i.e., a discursive table of contents] rather than subheadings. We tried that. Having the interviewer edit transcripts on the screen meant you had to ensure that all editors knew how to use a computer. I was one of them; I didn't know how to use a computer at that time. And there were others. So we couldn't all do that. It was difficult.

Baum: It was hard, and--

Chall: To figure out how to save costs.

Baum: Yes. Or how—well, I don't think we all—everyone got onto editing on the screen, and some people, some interviewers could do it comfortably. I always worried that whatever they changed was usually lost. You know, you just changed it and that was the—and you didn't know what had originally been there. Before when we edited on paper, you could see what you scratched out or you crossed off and wrote something else in, and I felt that was more accurate. But then with the computer, you'd send the interviewee, after you'd edited it on line, a nice clean--

Chall: Oh, yes, it was nice and clean, he had no way to know--

- Baum: He had no way to know that he'd fumbled around and around and around, and that you've greatly improved it, but without changing the meaning. So I don't know, it was always a problem. I see there's, something's presented for a staff meeting by one of the new interviewers, and he's come up with exactly these same things. He's thought of all these new things that we can do [laughing], and oh god, he's reinventing the wheel.
- Chall: To what degree did either Dr. Hart or the library have an influence on trying to get us to reduce costs? Didn't we have some library—well, I remember a couple of people came into the office to try to figure out how we could save costs. Remember?
- Baum: Yes, a few times they had—whomever was the financial officer of the library would study all of our costs, and I think you, Malca, were again often responsible for tracing every dollar we'd spent on some interviews, and what went into it so that they could analyze what these different steps cost.
- Chall: Exactly, right, I did that.
- Baum: And they were less smart than we were, because of course, they didn't know even what the processes were. It was ridiculous to, and it does sound like, My god, how can you spend that much money doing these things? Unless you've ever done one.
- Chall: That's right.
- Baum: Oh, dear, I don't remember who it was, one of them, he worked and worked.
- Chall: Oh, I remember, what was his name? Pudewell?
- Baum: That was Jeff Pudewell, but that was way out farther along. There was another way earlier, and he—they always came out with the same thing, that we'd make more effective use of the computer. That's what they came out with always. And then we'd say, "Yes, yes," because—oh.
- Chall: And we could, but it didn't save a lot of money, I remember. Things did work faster on the computer, but it didn't really save on number of pages per interview, double space—it didn't change that. It made it a little faster, I think. Transcribing and final typing were faster, because it was easier that way than with four carbons, of course.
- Baum: Oh, my, yes.
- Chall: The technical, the techniques got better. But I don't think that it saved an awful lot in total costs.
- Baum: No.

Chall: In 1996, you were listing presentations, and at that point, of course, and even before that, almost all interviews had a presentation. They were worthwhile, you felt. Do you want to talk about those presentations?

Baum: Well, originally, when we finished an oral history, we had a little book. We mailed it to the interviewee, and that was the end of that. We'd put it in the library, and sometimes in CU News, we put a little note that we finished that, and since hardly anyone read the CU News except a few library people, it didn't mean anything much. I think when we started doing presentations was when the person [interviewer], whatever group he came from—if it was a department at the university or a company or whatever—it was of some significance that that person had been interviewed, and that was the way to indicate to his colleagues. So we had to have that agency, or sometimes it was a professional group, we would try to get a time on a program that they already had. We didn't set up programs ourselves, hardly ever. Usually we tried to piggy-back in on something that was happening, and take five or ten minutes on the program to present the book to the interviewee, and then all his colleagues could clap [laughs].

And that really became essential, an essential part of fundraising, because as somebody got his oral history and everybody was aware of it, pretty soon that agency would call us and say, "We've got another person who's very outstanding, and we think ought to be interviewed." And then we'd work and try to get that person interviewed--

Chall: As long as they came with the money to do it.

Baum: And they'd have to put up the money, that's right. It was part of fundraising. And same way--

Chall: Outreach. And also outreach, to show the value of the work.

Baum: Oh, and we wanted the—what did we do? Well, one, we did a whole lot of plant people, who were active in the plant societies. They had annual conferences, and they had newsletters, and so the fact that somebody had his oral history done was recognized in some event, and then in their newsletters. And then somebody would notify us of somebody else that really deserved an oral history. So they were—yes.

And I think one of the things that I felt was terribly significant to me about oral history was how much the people who were interviewed appreciated being documented, and their families appreciated it, and their colleagues appreciated it. So it was a sort of a do-gooder job. You were happy that you had made that many people happy. Also people were very honored to have the presentation, and what's more, they were usually at the end of their life, or very often at the end of their life, and their friends and family would come to this event to honor them. So just as in Dr. Lowdermilk, when people came

from around the world to honor him, and he knew it, that was a wonderful feeling. So it made us a little bit philanthropic, although we never mentioned that as being one of our goals, because we weren't raising funds as a charity to do philanthropic help; it was definitely--

Chall: To make seniors happy.

Baum: Yes.

Chall: To go back now to 1972-73, and in your monthly log. In a monthly log in July of '73. You had a long, long list of interviews which were then in progress. I counted not the numbers but the number of series, and there were eighteen series. There must have been, oh, I don't know, a hundred or so interviews. We've talked about a number of them, like art and architecture, but it's interesting that, this far back, we were doing five interviews with the Cutter Laboratories. How did we get Cutter Lab, do you recall? I think Gaby [Gabrielle Morris] did those.

Baum: I can't remember why we started with one. It was the senior founder of Cutter's, which of course is and was a major Berkeley industry. And later, we did his sons, I believe, or several—well, four or five, other executives of Cutter Labs.

Chall: So there were five of them.

Baum: And I don't remember when we started it.

Chall: It may show in the catalogue [scraping sound then tape interruption] This is your July, 1973 monthly log, so... [pause while looking through papers]

Baum: Business and Labor. Well, we had two volumes. Yes. And they were interviewed by Gaby. Two volumes, and one was Robert Cutter, the founder. And then [the second] was five members of the company.

Chall: And he may have just walked in.

Baum: Yes, I cannot remember why that was.

Chall: Another big one in that list was the Quitzow project. [Dance of the Temple of the Wings—Boynton-Quitzow family in Berkeley]

Baum: Yes, dancing.

Chall: Yes, dancing. Now, how did we get the Quitzows? I remember that Suzanne did those. Those were dancers up on the hill somewhere in Berkeley.

Baum: Mm-hmm.

- Chall: Four of them.
- Baum: Let's see [looking at catalogue], there are three that are called Quitzow, and there might have been somebody who was not called Quitzow, they changed the name. Interviewed by Suzanne Riess and Margareta Mitchell. Oh, underwritten by Henry Dakin, there's the answer. Henry Dakin. Ah. Henry Dakin. There was the Dakin family, which subsequently manufactures little stuffed toys, but they've done a lot of things in Berkeley. They were a major Berkeley business family. Henry Dakin was the only surviving son. The whole family had chartered an airplane and went to Mexico for a big family vacation, and all of them were killed.
- Chall: Yes, we have all that in *Bancroftiana*, and [I read] a lot of publicity about that Dakin tragedy. [in your folder]
- Baum: Susanna Dakin, the mother of the Dakin family, was a very active Friend of the Bancroft Library, and she was volunteering at that time as the writer of the Bancroft Notes or the little journal that the Friends put out. She'd been up to our office, and looked at things, and written about it. It was a terrible, terrible loss to the Bancroft Library. Mrs. Dakin, everybody adored her, and I guess Henry Dakin must have funded it. I don't know if it was in memory of his mother, or—they did a lot of things, there are a lot of things in her memory. And why was he—I can't remember what the Dakins had to do with the Quitzows, but they did; the Quitzows were a famous dance family in Berkeley. Margareta Mitchell was a photographer in Berkeley, and she had done photographs of the Temple of the Wings--
- Chall: Ah, yes, that's it, it was the Temple of the Wings.
- Baum: And I think she'd put out a book on it. So she helped with the interviews. I think Suzanne did the interviews and Gretta was photographing while she did that.
- Chall: I remember that going on. Yes. That's just so special and so unusual, to have it in here with some of the other things that we had already talked about, like suffragists and university history and wine and things like that. The Quitzow just was different.
- Baum: Well, it fits very well with the arts, and it fits very well with the work Suzanne was doing.
- Chall: Yes, yes.
- Baum: We've always done something in the arts.

Chall: We'd already started the Sierra Club project in 1973. We had two already. And that was even before Ann Lage came on the staff. There were two in progress.

Baum: Well, we captured Ann Lage, we took her away from the Sierra Club. She was a volunteer.

Chall: She was doing that as a volunteer?

Baum: She was a volunteer. She and Ray, her husband, were volunteers for the Sierra Club History Committee.

Chall: I see. Well, we nabbed a good one.

Baum: Yeah.

Chall: All right. Now, that's about where I am going to leave the chronological story. And we're going on to some specific topics, just in time to finish this tape.*

[End audiofile 12, begin audiofile 13 (tape 8, side A)]

Chall: Why were most of the staff women? I can remember in all the years that I worked for ROHO that we had maybe four men on the staff from time to time. They didn't always last very long. How come we were—well, you almost always hired a woman, and when you were looking for somebody for a special project, you hired a woman. Is that because they applied? Or was it just an accident?

Baum: I'm trying to think how we got our interviewers, because sometimes they were introduced to me by someone, a faculty member or library person or someone, who would be a good interviewer. And they were women. Well, first of all, if you will go back to what our wages were--

Chall: Right. [laughter] That's a good point.

Baum: There's no problem with figuring it out.

Chall: Most of us were married.

Baum: The money that we got paid, it was not a position. It didn't have—what did we call it?—a lot that had money with it. And so they were all part-time, there were all these minimal amounts of money.

* The plan for Willa's oral history was that Chall would take the history from the beginning through about 1973.

- Chall: And most of us at that time were housewives.
- Baum: Yes, and I needed people who—let's see. A lot of part-timers are not really looking to stay. They are looking to get a job until—they're often times graduate students. People say, Why don't you get graduate students? Well, graduate students are not going to stay. That's only an interim job until they get a teaching position. And it seemed to me that the way that we went on from one interview to another, that the people who learned and became valuable as the chief interviewer for an area, a field, had been there quite a long time working on this. And so I did not want people who were going to go away. So that's why we hardly ever used graduate students.
- We did have a few men, and they—who did we have? Well, we had Jim Rowland.
- Chall: Yes. He was working, I think, on one of the gubernatorial--
- Baum: He was on the Warren project, wasn't he?
- Chall: Yes, I think so.
- Baum: And I think he was a graduate student. And he was interested, when we hired him he was interested in one of the aspects of the Warren administration we were documenting, which had to do with the legislature. But eventually, he quit and took a job selling computers, or some business job, because he needed to make a living. Yes, so I think that's the reason, that we—the funding didn't work. It never has.
- Chall: Yes, they're still mainly women. And also, it was a non-hierarchical kind of administration. That was because you were in charge. Do you have any theory of administration? I mean, [laughter] that's a laugh. Because I know you just fell into the job in 1954 and stayed on. But eventually, you had quite a job to do in terms of administration. So did you grow into a certain methodology that you were conscious of?
- Baum: Let's see. No, it wasn't. But I certainly was not the type of person who was trying to be the top of any heap. I would not have been able to consider myself as superior in any way to the people that I hired. Because they were all educated and competent, and—I mean, there just was no way to be superior to them. [laughter]
- Chall: That may be, but some women wouldn't have accepted it that way. They wouldn't have—or even men, they just wouldn't have operated like that. But it did make a difference, I'm sure, in the way the office ran. There wasn't a lot of—there wasn't any competition among us as interviewers. I mean, we all took what assignments you gave us, and many times we raised our own funds, and we just said we can go ahead and do this now, we've got the money.

- Baum: Mm-hmm.
- Chall: Even among the staff, there was a camaraderie usually between the transcribers and typists and the clerical people, the front desk people, and the professional staff, if you want to call it that. The interviewers. There was a camaraderie among them, among them, among the clericals themselves and among the interviewers themselves, and then among the interviewers and the clericals—there was always some overlap. Clericals were not just people who had typewriters. Some of them were writing books, some of them were writing poetry, some were doing a lot of research. They just happened to be hired as transcribers.
- Baum: Yes. I think we did have some hierarchical bit. Some of the transcribers were not coworkers with the interviewers. I didn't ever like that, but in part, the transcribers, they were students. They were often students.
- Chall: That's true.
- Baum: They were not used to speaking up. We always tried to get the transcribers to talk to their interviewer, so that they could have some feeling, some feedback for the interviewer of how the interview went, and feedback on how the transcribing was going. Some transcribers would fit right in with the office, but a lot of them didn't. And I think it's because they were young students often. We've had different front-desk people. On the whole, our front-desk people were not hierarchical. We have had, we had one or so who really took their position as being head of the office seriously, and that was a very unfortunate time for us. [laughs]
- Chall: I'd forgotten about those folks. But there was kind of a bond that would be formed if somebody needed help. I remember specifically that we had a young man, Sam, in the early days of AIDS when nobody knew anything about AIDS--
- Baum: Yes, he was a transcriber, yes.
- Chall: Yes, he was a transcriber, I think he worked at the front desk some time. He came from the South, and his family had really disowned him. When things got really serious, several of the staff, mostly they were the other clericals, just bonded with him and took care of him. They took care of him in his home, they even went with him to his parents' home in the South, Tennessee or someplace like that, I don't know where it was.
- Baum: Let's see if I can get--
- Chall: Lauren did—[Lauren Dunlap]

- Baum: She went down to his funeral. I think she felt it was so important to go, and for his redneck parents to know that our office really valued him so tremendously.
- Chall: That's right. It was the kind of thing that stays in one's memory about the way the staff responded, and helped him.
- Baum: Yes. And he was very smart and very good, and very shy.
- Chall: Yes, he was, he was all of that. It was sad when he became so ill, in the days when there was no help. I mean, there was no medication, there was nothing that you could do with those young men.
- There was, I think, a certain—how shall I put it?—some of us as interviewers were sort of prima donnas. I guess we were only prima donnas to the extent that we were very fussy about how our interviews were transcribed. [laughter] And there we showed our position, I suppose. We would complain that so-and-so just didn't do a good job with our transcripts and our interviews, and we wanted some other so-and-so to do it. And this was a problem, of course, because to another [interviewer], that so-and-so would be all right. So that was about the place when many of us would show a status. [laughs] You or somebody else used to have to work that out. But other than that, we were all on the same—more or less on the same track.
- There were friendships that came about among the interviewers and their interviewees. I remember that you became a good friend of the Arnsteins and their whole family. Arnstein's daughter, and what was the dancer's name?
- Baum: Let's see, Edith [Jenkins] was the daughter of Lawrence and Flora Arnstein. Her daughter was Margaret Jenkins.
- Chall: Margaret Jenkins, that was it.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: And she was the great dancer, choreographer. And her husband was a labor leader--
- Baum: Edith's husband was a labor leader, David Jenkins. We did do his oral history.
- Chall: Yes, we did. So that was a strong bond there between you and the whole Arnstein family.
- Baum: And it was funny—I didn't do the Arnstein interview. Mr. Arnstein, Lawrence Arnstein, was interviewed for public health, I think. He was a great, just a lobbyist, a citizen lobbyist, shall we say, for one of the things—oh, one of the things he was always lobbying for was, oh, gosh--

- Chall: It may be in here. [Catalogue]
- Baum: Sexual illnesses, I forget—venereal disease. Oh, let's see. And he knew people, it was specially during World War II and there wasn't any public health. Lawrence Arnstein [looking through catalogue]. I believe that Edna Daniel was the one who got me on that, because she was a nurse. She knew a lot about ... [pause] Many of these people were interviewed two or three times, but it's only because Lawrence Arnstein was a good friend of Earl Warren. [pause, then reading the catalogue entry] Lawrence Arnstein, "Community Service in California Public Health and Social Welfare." Venereal disease control was a big thing he worked in. He worked for crippled children. He worked very hard for women that would come in and work for people who were home-bound, instead of sending them to an old age home. These women would be hired to come in and give them a hand. That problem, the program went up and down.
- Anyway, he was interviewed in 1961 by Edna Daniel, and when I reviewed the whole oral history, I said, "Well, I think Lawrence Arnstein was Jewish, wasn't he?" "Yes, he was." But Edna was an old-fashioned lady where you don't discuss religion. There are a lot of things you don't discuss among old-fashioned ladies, and she would not speak to him about religion. Just wasn't done. And so I had to go, and I went to interview him one more time, and I interviewed Mrs. Arnstein together [with him], to get his background and to get what being Jewish was like, and a little bit.
- Well, I became such good friends of them [laughing]
- Chall: Oh, that was the reason!
- Baum: So I was always so grateful that Edna left that opening and that I was able to meet the Arnsteins.
- Chall: I know it was a longtime friendship, because you and I were going to Margaret Jenkins's dance recitals for years, even when I didn't understand them at all.
- Baum: Yes. [laughs]
- Chall: But David Jenkins turned out to be a very important labor interview.
- Baum: Oh, yes, and Lisa Rubens did that one. Her husband was active in the labor movement, and that's how she knew the labor movement and was able to do—and knew the Arnsteins, knew David Jenkins really well.
- Chall: Yes, and I remember that. You also became a good friend of the woman whose mother came out of the suffragist movement. She was a well known art teacher at Mills. What was her name?

- Baum: Katherine Caldwell. And her mother was Sara Bard Field.
- Chall: And that was a close relationship.
- Baum: Sara Bard Field was a suffragist, and it was—Chita was assigned way back when she was first hired to interview Sara Bard Field. I think I've told the story about how that became the suffragist project--
- Chall: Yes, because she wrote a major article about it. I think it was Sara Bard Field and other suffragists who took a car and came across the United States, was that it?
- Baum: Yes. And Kay Caldwell was Sara Bard Field's daughter. So Kay Caldwell always had a little—she had difficulty dealing with her mother, as I think a lot of people would have had a difficulty, because Sara Bard Field was a real prima donna. Anyhow, eventually—oh, Katherine Caldwell wrote a lovely introduction to Sara Bard Field's oral history. She called it an afterword. She told about some of the things that upset her about her mother, and it was a very well written and thoughtful piece that she wrote. And now I can't remember why we moved from that some time down the line to interviewing Katherine Caldwell. She was a professor of Asian art at Mills College. Her husband was a professor of English here at Cal, and so they were really into the faculty social swing. I think it was part of the, maybe University of California series or something, but--
- Chall: But we did it rather late in her life. It was not one of these really early ones. [Catalogue II]
- Baum: Yes. No, no it wasn't. It went back to our early ones, but--
- Chall: And then you remained for many, many years a close friend.
- Baum: I know why we did Katherine Caldwell: one of her fans, an ardent fan, was Jim Kantor, who was the university archivist. Jim Kantor kept telling me he would give me a thousand dollars or something if we would do--
- Chall: Minimal.
- Baum: Yes, it was a minimal amount, but it was enough--
- Chall: To start.
- Baum: And so eventually I took his money. I forget who did the interview. Not me. At a certain point, I stopped doing any interviews--
- Chall: Oh, yes, this was later. It might have been Suzanne.

- Baum: Could have been, yes. [looks through catalogue]
- Chall: Is that spelled with a C?
- Baum: I'll tell you in a minute. It's very, very important, and I can't remember. [laughs] And so is Sara, it's very, very important, because Kay's—hmm. [pause] Kay's daughter's name is Sara, and I can't—they care very, very much how it's spelled, if it's spelled like the grandmother or it's—[laughs]. [pause] One of our rules used to be that you can't shuffle through books and things while you're interviewing. [tape interruption]
- Chall: I think her interview is listed in the newer book that I didn't bring with me today. [Catalogue II]
- Baum: Yes. I'm sure that must say, yes.
- Chall: I'll check that one out. I didn't bring it with me today. I left it at home. I thought I had put everything in here but--[tape interruption]
- Baum: Certainly is interesting to see how one interview led to another often. What we're not talking about, and haven't talked about, is the introductions.--
- Baum: --
- Chall: Oh, yes, well, why don't we talk about it now? You're talking about introductions--
- Baum: To the oral histories.
- Chall: That are different from interview histories.
- Baum: Yes, the interview history was written by the interviewer, and the interview history's purpose was to help the user to know how this interview came about, who funded it, what were the conditions of the interview, especially to give them little clues to whether the interviewee seemed pretty ill and having a hard time, or were they really sharp and ready to go.
- Then the introduction by—honorable introduction, we called it—but it was by somebody in the field, the interviewee's field, or maybe sometimes it was a family member, but it was someone outside who could give an outside view of the interviewee. Usually we tried to get a colleague. Sometimes, the introductions were just—they were a way of getting somebody who we weren't able to interview but were really part of the story, and they could come in as an introduction-writer.

For example, this Sara Bard Field. The introduction was by Dorothy Erskine. And Dorothy Erskine was very prominent in San Francisco politics, or was it politics, social welfare? And we never did interview Dorothy Erskine--

Chall: Environment.

Baum: Environment, yes. So one should look up the name of the introducer—I mean, these introductions are a clue for the researcher to also find somebody else who was very significant in the field, who may or may not have been interviewed. Probably wasn't interviewed. Like Jeannette Rankin, remember, you had John Kirkley--

Chall: Oh, yes, he was a young man who was very close to Jeannette Rankin.

Baum: Yes, worked very closely with her, and I think filled in a lot of things that she was not able to talk about at that time. So the introductions were another thing that we could waggle about the cost. Because they did take—they took money, but mostly to arrange them. We never paid anybody for them but we had to spend time with them.

Chall: Well, we have some very notable introductions, introducers.

Baum: Yes, I always thought we ought to put out a volume of just introductions. And I think we should put out a volume of some of the interview histories, because they are so good, so well written, so—what do I want to say? They so caught the feeling of the person that was being interviewed, and the time that he was being interviewed, by the interviewer. The interviewers were good, too, and they worked very hard on those.

Chall: They took a lot of time. They took me lots of time, because I remember that I would always put them through a peer review. For many years it was you, and then when you were too busy, I think I used Sally Hughes or somebody else. But I never wrote an interview history without having it go through a review. Just because I never felt that competent about my writing. And I imagine that some people did the same thing, but most, many of our interviewers were exceptionally good writers.

Baum: Right, and I think some of our interviewers became masters, major speakers and knowledgeable about the field. And they could tie together in their introduction what this interview was about, and who else was significant in there. So while we didn't ever write scholarly articles based on our interviews, a lot of that material is in there.

Chall: I remember one of the other ways that we thought about saving costs was not to write an interview history that was more than about a paragraph.

Baum: That's right.

- Chall: And none of us could do that.
- Baum: And UCLA used to do that. They just filled in blanks, like where was the interview done: blank. How many hours: blank. And so that was a very quick thing.
- Chall: That's right. But it didn't fit in with our philosophy.
- Baum: It didn't give the user any clue as to what happened, what was the relationship between the persons that were working on this and--
- Chall: Yes, that's right. I guess it was through you—these things came through your fertile brain. Your concept of what the oral history was supposed to do and be.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: And we all followed your—not example, your theory. We felt that it was right. It was very hard to change us. [laughter] When the new regime came in, I think.
- Baum: Oh, yes. Well, the new regimes are going to be cheaper, but they're not going to be nearly as good.
- Chall: We're almost out of tape here, but I thought that we might talk about a couple of people whose names have not come up yet. In one way or another, they were attached to ROHO.

[End tape 8, side A; begin side B]

- Chall: We might talk about some people who were important in the early days of ROHO that we haven't talked about. Knox Mellon. Tell me about Knox. I saw his name the other day in the newspaper, because he is the head of the California Mission Foundation. There was an article in the newspaper about saving the missions up and down California. Some of them are falling apart and they need restructuring. There's an argument about whether, if the state puts money into it, that it has to do with a religion, the state and religion. And Knox is knocking his head, I guess, on that one. But I hadn't seen his name for a long time, and hadn't heard about him. He was a close associate, I think, in the Oral History Association, wasn't he?
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: Do you have anything to say about Knox and his wife, Carlotta Herman?
- Baum: I suppose I first met Knox in that very first oral history gathering that was called by UCLA, I think. And I know Knox was very prominent in the early days of the Oral History Association, I think as the treasurer. We thought

anyone named Knox Mellon would have to be a treasurer. [laughter] And he taught history at, what was the name of the school? It was a women's college-

Chall: St. Mary's?

Baum: No--

Chall: Marymount—it was a Catholic girls' school.

Baum: Yes, and quite well known for its—it did some sort of artistic innovations. We'll have to fill that in, because it was—Immaculate Heart?

Chall: Oh, that was it, it was Immaculate Heart.

Baum: In Los Angeles.

Chall: Yes. Because I went there and spoke to his class. I taught them to do oral history about women.

Baum: Anyway, so I saw Knox every year at the Oral History Association, and his assistant was Carlotta Herman, who came to the oral history colloquia, and she was finishing her Ph.D. And eventually, Carlotta married Knox, and Carlotta had some other, had some positions in the Oral History Association too, after she finished her Ph.D. I think up until the time when she was working on her Ph.D., she didn't have time for that. And I believe she taught at Immaculate Heart, or she—oh, she did eventually teach at UCLA.

Chall: And she was an early member of the Women's Political Caucus, I remember. She was very active in the early women's movement.

Baum: Yes. So, what can I say about Knox? He always was a good friend, and they—oh, when [Governor Edmund G., Jr.] Jerry Brown was—Knox was very active in the Democratic party. He worked on Jerry Brown's campaign. When Jerry Brown was elected governor of California, let's see, where did Knox and Carlotta live?

Chall: They both went into his administration.

Baum: They moved to Sacramento, and Carlotta became Jerry's appointment secretary, I think.

Chall: That's right, she did.

Baum: And Knox was in charge of some big historical project in California. And later, Carlotta went—she was hired by UCLA and worked with the chancellor directly, administration. They bought a house, oh, a beautiful house in

Riverside. Oh! [laughter] And Knox was teaching oral history at UC Riverside. He also had a major position, I think head of the Mission Inn, historical thing. So that's how he's moved into the missions.

And I don't know what Carlotta's doing now. I haven't seen her lately.

Chall: We haven't been able to go through all of the significant, I suppose we could call them significant, interviewers whom you had on your staff and what they did. But one person, Elaine Dorfman, I think we should talk about, because she was not just an interviewer. She did a few interviews. But she became the local teacher of oral history in the Berkeley area, and there wasn't a teacher of oral history until—you managed to get her into that job. Do you want to talk about Elaine?

Baum: Elaine, and do you remember when she came in, what project she came in to work on?

Chall: Yes, she came in to do--

Baum: Because I know she was your friend, and--

Chall: She was my friend. She had been, she and her husband had been friends of ours for many, many years. I think starting in the fifties, perhaps. Her husband died tragically: he was murdered in his store. They had five children. They were living, I think, in Walnut Creek, and they had a home there. She stayed on. I think ultimately, she became a teacher and worked for many years at Healds.

Baum: And that's a business school.

Chall: Yes, Healds Business School. I think it was a conference that was at Magnes Museum on Jewish history, and there were the editors of the Western Jewish History Society journal there from Los Angeles, and, oh, various other people, I think there was a woman from Seattle speaking on Sephardic Jews. It was a very interesting group of people and speakers. I spoke on the oral histories of the Jewish people that I had done, and I quoted from various ones to give it some substance. Elaine at that time came up to me and said, "I would like to get involved doing oral history if I could." And so when the time came, you were looking for somebody to do an oral history, I think it was K-u-h-n--

Baum: Kuhn, Marshall Kuhn.

Chall: Marshall Kuhn. She came in and she did the Marshall Kuhn. I remember that my job was to help her with the interview, and editing, and all that goes with it. You said, "Give her some training," and I did. I think that was a—I'm not sure—Sierra Club interview. I think I'll turn this off for a moment, but I think that was—[tape interruption]

[looking at catalogue] So she did it through the American Jewish Congress and the Sierra Club.

Then came this call to you for someone to teach oral history on a continuous basis. And we needed somebody with a teaching credential. I told you that Elaine had one, and she started teaching. She became a really important teacher of oral history here in Berkeley, for many years.

Baum: Yes. Yes, Elaine did a lot of teaching, either just a workshop for various clubs, or regular courses. I think she taught at Vista, which was the local junior college.

Chall: Yes, that was it.

Baum: And so practically everyone still, and I don't know how long she's been dead, about five years or more?

Chall: At least, at least, maybe longer.

Baum: They all teach as Elaine taught them. They had to be meticulous about what they did.

Chall: Yes. She left a box of lesson plans and methods and whatnot.

Baum: Yes, she had all kinds of teaching materials. So anyway, she is the teacher of northern California, and she died I don't know how many years ago, but suddenly, and we've had to pick up since then. Other people have arisen, but I think they all teach the Elaine Dorfman method.

Chall: That was really important, because she did teach for a long time.

Baum: But the other thing she did: We also got requests often, or questions, to talk about geriatrics. Because geriatrics had begun to use oral history as a therapy, to interview old souls in various old age homes in order to help their brain keep on track. And I said, "I don't think—" I never thought that geriatric oral history was oral history. I thought the purpose of that is therapy, and not historical information. And we should not get involved in that. On the other hand, it was obvious that they were doing interviews, and that they could be well done or not well done. I had about a half a drawer full of articles and stuff on geriatric use of oral history, so I asked Elaine to take that on. Well, she did. She had pretty soon boxes and boxes of material. She was teaching at the Home for Jewish Parents [Oakland]. I know she put on some very good projects there. Their purpose was therapy, but they did some terrific exhibits of the person's oral history, and photographs, and who they were in their youth. So that was very fine work that Elaine had done.

Well, when she died, I never did anything about geriatrics after that. ROHO dropped out of the geriatric angle. But I'd always felt I really had covered it well. [laughs]

I wanted to say about Marshall Kuhn, I don't remember why we started interviewing him. He's in part of the Jewish history project funded by the Magnes Museum, and maybe that's why we started to do him, but one of the things he was doing besides that was running the Sierra Club history committee. Oh, I remember why I—we started to do Marshall Kuhn because he knew—[pause] I can't put my finger on it. The Indian that, the--

Chall: The Indian who--?

Baum: Who was found by [Alfred] Kroeber?

Chall: Yes, the Kroebers. Ishi?

Baum: Ishi! Marshall Kuhn had known Ishi personally.

Chall: Is that so!

Baum: [laughs] And I don't know why I knew that, but I knew that he had, and so I think it was this Ishi connection that started the interview with him. Well, he was very active in San Francisco, in Jewish affairs, in all kinds of community affairs, and the Sierra Club. So Elaine interviewed him.

Chall: That was a long interview. That was how many pages? I think that's a pretty good sized--

Baum: 365.

Chall: Yes, I remember it was a good-sized interview.

Baum: But it was there that I got involved, through Marshall, with the Sierra Club history committee. And that's how we got into the Sierra Club, and that's how we captured Ann Lage as our interviewer. [laughs]

Chall: Let's see, well, if one were to draw concentric circles or something--

Baum: Yes, yes.

Chall: Projects in concentric circles.

Baum: So I would say that Elaine Dorfman had had a great influence on oral history in the Bay Area, and it was a terrible loss --

- Chall: We have talked a great deal about going after grants, because you were always reading the newspaper, and various kinds of journals, to find out who might be important in some organization, or some ideas that would be important. We covered so many projects that you wanted to do that came out of whatever you were reading. Or somebody might come in to talk to you about something or somebody. Then we often had to go after the money for it.
- Baum: Sometimes faculty members came to talk to us, too, about who we should be interviewing.
- Chall: But sometimes money walked in the door, with a grant, little one, might have been, and the name of a person. Well, Lowdermilk was one, that turned out to be quite major for its first \$8,000 or whatever it was we had. But there were others who walked in the door. I'm thinking of Kaiser Permanente, Ralph Tyler—these are the ones I know because I did them. And there were many others that just came in and said, "We need to do this, we're having a twenty-fifth anniversary," that was Kaiser. "We need to get old-timers on this." Or, somebody came in who knew Ralph Tyler, "Well, we need to do Ralph Tyler. We've got the money, we have a foundation, he's been on the board, we want to spend the money on Ralph Tyler." But then there were others. Can you think of others who just walked in the door and said, "Look"?
- Baum: I know there have been a number of them. I think I probably told Germaine about the Julia Morgan one. I'll quickly—The vice president of the university lived in what was called the Vice President's House in Berkeley, which was a very elegant home. His wife had—Chester McCorkle I think is his name. His wife had found up in the attic, when she was poking around, a big bundle of papers that were the plans and so on of this house that they were living in, and bills and various things related to the building of the house. She had looked at it and thought it was very interesting, and she had come to see Dr. Hart. She said, "I've found this, there's an architect who did this beautiful house, and here's all his papers, and I think we should document her." And it was Julia Morgan, whom hardly anybody had heard of. I mean, they'd heard of her, of course, but she was not famous.
- Dr. Hart called me in and I said, "Julia Morgan's dead, Dr. Hart." [laughter] But we thought about it, and for this I have to give Suzanne Riess great credit. She—we thought, What can we do with this? And we looked at the papers, and we could get the names of people who had worked with Julia Morgan. So we put together—Suzanne put together a project doing all kinds of people who had been related to Julia Morgan, and Mrs. McCorkle managed to get the university to put up the money for the Julia Morgan project. From then on, we really moved into a lot of architectural things. But it was also the rise of the fame of Julia Morgan, because her fame was probably rising at the time, but it was very—it was a great project. It walked in the door, and it took some very creative thinking to figure out how to make a project out of a dead person, as oral history.

- Chall: And we've done that again.
- Baum: It's a splendid oral history.
- Chall: And I think there was a, I'm not sure whether it was Margaretta Mitchell, but somebody I think worked with Suzanne on that. I think somebody wrote a book after that.
- Baum: Sara Boutelle--
- Chall: Oh, that's right, that's who it was.
- Baum: Sara Boutelle is now the famed biographer of Julia Morgan, and she was—I keep telling this story over and over, I'm probably getting it mixed up or—let's see. Julia Morgan. I think this was fairly early in our career.
- Chall: Well, I kind of remember it, so it must have been after '67. Well, of course, that's early in our career too. [pause, pages shuffling]
- Baum: Because we did some others, and Suzanne did them--
- Chall: Yes, I think we did another--
- Baum: Thomas Church was one she did. [reading catalogue] "The study of the California architect Julia Morgan, who had died in 1957." And the interviewing was done in—no, no—in 1974 and '75 by Suzanne Riess, Sally Woodbridge, and Sara Boutelle. Oh, yes, and then she did a lot more with the people she'd interviewed about Julia Morgan, she later went on to do Robert Ratcliff and--
- Chall: Oh, Suzanne?
- Baum: Yes. And some of the persons that she'd found--
- Chall: Yes, that was a spinoff on that--
- Baum: Yes, spinoff, that's the word. Yes.
- Chall: Also later, money used to just be available for interviews on water resources, because the Water Resources Center used to just put, I think it was something like, I don't know, \$10,000 into our pockets every year or so, and we could just have a project. It was wonderful. We never had to ask for it after a while, so it enabled me to look around and say what the next one ought to be.
- Baum: I'm sure we must have asked the—we probably asked the water resources to help fund Lowdermilk. How did they learn about us?

Chall: Well, they learned about us because, I forget who was the chairman of that center, I forget his name [Arthur Pillsbury], but we did get money from the center. The archives were in Berkeley [with Gerry Giefer] and at UCLA [with Dr. Pillsbury]. And after that, we often would ask them for money, and they would give us a few hundred dollars. But eventually, in the late nineties, I would just find that there was money available.

Baum: Yes. Water was always a big subject. We started with water--

Chall: You started it, and just—oh, I know another one that walked in the door, and that had to do with water, and that was Heller, what's his name--

Baum: Edward?

Chall: Not Edward, the son. I thought of his name just this morning. [tape interruption] Alfred Heller walked in the door with one of the men who had been very active in water resources. I'll have to remember that one. They said, "Land-use planning is very important in the whole field of water. You can't just do water without knowing about land-use planning." And we said, "You're absolutely right, and what should we do about it?" Well, they wanted an interview series on land-use planning. Sam Wood was the man who came with Alfred Heller. And I had known about him through my interviews with Paul Taylor.

So they said, "Work up an outline, people that could be interviewed and what it would be like, and we'll fund it." Alfred would fund it. And so we did. That turned out to be a major interview series. There were three volumes, and I don't remember how many people were in it, but they had everything to do with the environment, land-use planning, and regional government. I got Mr. Knox on regional government. He had been propounding it for years to no avail in the state legislature.

So that walked in the door, although Mr. Heller, who was a wealthy man, had enough money to—he wasn't just going to give it away. He really required that we set our plan down. Remember we had several interviews with him, and he wanted to talk about it, and he checked our budget—I mean, the whole thing was done as if he were a foundation, only he was nice. [laughter] Nice about it. And it wasn't too cumbersome, but it had to be very exact and very careful. And I think we did it. I mean, I just went out and did it. And it was good. I felt very pleased about it.

Baum: Yes, that's probably--

Chall: So that was money that came in through the door.

Baum: Some of these series were just invented. They weren't really planned at first.

- Chall: That may be that it was later on, and maybe after, maybe 1980 some time, and it wouldn't have been in the early catalogue.
- Baum: Well, let's see. [looking at catalogue] Elinor Heller is the only--
- Chall: Elinor Heller, yes, that was his mother.
- Baum: Yes. Oh, there was a nice presentation for Elinor Heller, wasn't there? I can't quite remember.
- Chall: I don't think there was a presentation, because--
- Baum: She died, didn't she?
- Chall: Well, no, I went out with two volumes, one for her and one for, I think one for one of her great close friends. She gave one to him. And I drove out to Atheron, and they, she and her friend were sitting outside, and I handed it to her, and they both looked it over, and that was it. She died a number of years later.
- Baum: In this volume, she's in process. And it said she's died in 1987, and you interviewed her from 1974—the last interview was 1980.
- Chall: So Alfred Heller probably came in with his land-use planning after 1980.
- Baum: That's right, and she was Women in Politics, wasn't she a starter--
- Chall: She was in my Women in Politics, yes. And I had a long interview with her. I mean, it must have been twenty or thirty hours, I'm sure. Because she was also a regent, and so she had a great deal to say about being a regent and what it was like during the problem days of the late sixties, early seventies. Reagan as governor. She was a good friend of Pat Brown's. She was a very elegant lady, very bright. She was also a collector of fine bookbindings.
- Baum: Oh, yes.
- Chall: Oh, and she showed them to me on the date of my last interview. We sat on the couch and she brought out the books and showed them to me.
- Baum: [looking at Catalogue] We have Pauline Davis, sealed until 2010.
- Chall: [laughs] Yes.
- Baum: Oh, that's the one who thinks her son was going to be a judge.

Chall: Judge, yes. She was one of the early women legislators in the state government. And it was a good interview, and it's just a shame [to put it under seal for so many years.]

[End audiofile 13, end of session]

Interview with Willa Baum

Interviewed by Malca Chall; present as videographer, Lisa Rubens

Interview 8: March 16, 2005

[Begin audiofile 14 (tape 9, side A)]

Chall: Well, I'm going to start here in a place that doesn't have anything to do with videotaping. Remember, we were always wondering how much money did we get for the Lowdermilk? [parrot squawks intermittently in background] Because we had to go around and get a lot of money afterwards.

Baum: Yes.

Chall: In the little folio that the staff gave me when I retired was a letter from you, and it discussed the fact that you had now received \$1,000 to start the Lowdermilk interview.

Baum: Oh, so you could start your job.

Chall: So I started my job at \$1,000, and then I went back and looked at something that we have discussed, and that was that [several telephones ring at once] in your 1966 scrapbook—

Baum: Stop a minute, because I—[tape interruption]

Chall: Okay, so we started out with the Lowdermilk at \$1,000. When we were having our discussion in terms of costs and things, I think we had gone over this, but now it's even more relevant. In 1966, in your scrapbook, I found a table—a page that had to do with the cost of interviews. And here was the breakdown: the average cost to complete a memoir series is \$10,000, and that's seven to eight full-length memoirs, plus several short subject areas supplementing the interviews. The series include a full-length memoir—that was for one like Dr. Lowdermilk—\$1,000, seven to eight recorded interview sessions of one and a half hours each. Then there was the cost of transcribing, et cetera, et cetera. So that's why I came in to do Dr. Lowdermilk's at \$1,000, and told Mrs. Lowdermilk that we would do it in eight sessions, and she said, "That's impossible," so we have all that on tape already.

And then I looked at a breakdown that we had made that I happened to have in my ephemera file, and this is a breakdown of the oral history costs per recorded hour in 1997. And while it deals with two-hour sessions, I figured that it was about five two-hour sessions would equal about, whatever it was, one—

Baum: Eight hour-and-a-half ones.

- Chall: That total cost came to \$11,661, as opposed to what we said could be done for \$1,000. So that's the difference between 1966 and 1997, thirty years. But—
- Baum: Well, that's—
- Chall: But we all got raises. It took the same amount of time, basically, as it had before, to do all this, although we did add some things to it. Binding costs more money, pictures cost more money, pages cost more money. That's a difference, and I just thought it would be sort of fun to [see the comparison]. We had no clue about how much I had come in to do.
- Baum: Mm-hmm. That always made me think about— you always hear that you should not undertake something unless you know you have the funding. "It's irresponsible." And I used to think about that and think, I know that I can't do that on that money. Should I turn it down? Or, should I figure, I need to get this person. If I just get him on tape, that's still something. That once you— you've just got to start. That was my philosophy, and I know that some of us, some of our staff thought that was irresponsible. Who? Probably Malca and Harriet Nathan [laughter] were the ones who believed that you should know what you're doing and have the money in hand before you start. [laughing]
- Chall: But you were right, because there were times when we put an interview [transcript] away until we felt the time was right to get the money. I think that was done with, I remember with the soil scientist whose name I don't remember, as he came up to his ninetieth birthday. We had tried for years, Ora Huth had been trying, and I guess whoever else had been trying for a long time. It had been primarily a donated tape, I think. When he was going to be honored, really honored by the university and others in the field, you thought, this is the time. So I called around various departments that had something to do with water or soil, et cetera—
- Baum: Was that Hans Jenny?
- Chall: Hans Jenny, that was Hans Jenny.
- Baum: Hans Jenny, yes.
- Chall: And we did, we got all the money that we needed, and I put it together. Finished it, worked on the index, and went to Hans Jenny, and we discussed the index, and other aspects about [the editing]. And then he did indeed have an honorable presentation.
- Baum: Oh, he was greatly admired, people came from all over the world to honor him.
- Chall: That's right, yes, they did. They were—it was an all-day seminar of some kind.

- Baum: Yes, I think they published the seminar, too.
- Chall: I really enjoyed working with him. He was a—his whole theory of soils, something I have never known about before.
- Baum: Well, it was funny—some of the funding came from Mrs. Jenny, and it was anonymous. She didn't want her husband to know that she had contributed to it. So I never said a word. But I had talked to her a number of times. She'd come up to the office, and she was a small, gray-haired woman, and sort of undistinguishable in appearance. And so every time I'd see her, I'd look at her sort of puzzled, and she'd tell me she was Mrs. Jenny, and I'd say, "Oh, yes." So we were riding in the elevator up to my office one time, and I was looking at this little gray-haired woman and wondering, now, who is this lady, and she—looked at me and then she said, "Hmm, I have to give you more than \$1,000 for you to recognize me, don't I?" [laughing] She was—
- Chall: That was a cryptic remark.
- Baum: She was a very bright lady, and busy doing a lot of things. [laughs] Just the right wife for Hans Jenny.
- Chall: Yes. Well, we did get the money, and it was a splendid day. Oh, I remember that one well.
- [Tape interruption: From now on the videotape is running and Mrs. Chall is showing various guides, brochures, et cetera, developed for use of staff or for ROHO publicity. The results were not good, and the video is not available. Copies of many items discussed will be deposited in the Bancroft Library along with the oral history transcript—MC]
- Chall: Over the years, we had to print our own style guides. When I look at the style guide here, style guides for—that's for editing, I think. Then we have indexing, and then we have some things about tables of contents. This is indexing. We were always revising them, so although not all of these have dates on them, they're obviously revisions from one maybe half-decade to another. So take a look, and here's something that you must have taken off of the page, page 874 of something. You are showing how to punctuate [shuffling papers] dashes.
- This seems to be the final typed edition of an interview that you looked at at the last minute, which was one of your good habits, of looking at the last minute before it was finally put to bed, and catching errors. So it must have been one of mine, because I put it into my folder.
- Baum: Clara, that's yours. Clara Shirpser—
- Chall: Right.

- Baum: Go see Hubert Humphrey. [laughter]
- Chall: Oh, yes, that's right. So tell me about that, the use of all of these continually updated style guides.
- Baum: Well, it always was hard to figure out punctuation, and how we ended everything, and so we had a style guide. We used the *Chicago Manual of Style*, and it didn't answer all the questions. First of all, it was hard to use, and second, it often didn't answer the questions that we had. And so we did try to make some things that we could follow ourselves, because we spent so much time looking up. What else can I tell you, except that no matter what we did, it was always coming out different. And maybe, I guess punctuation was changing in the country—
- Chall: It did change, it did change over the years, I believe. I found something in my files: I asked somebody to give me an answer to a question—I think it was using a double L in traveler, something of this kind. The person who had looked it up for me, the spelling, said that we usually just use one L. But my answer was that PST prefers two—I gather that that was Paul Schuster Taylor. He preferred two, and possibly after having looked at some of his transcripts that he had already looked over, I found that we were in conflict, as we often were, about spelling. Mrs. Sylvia McLaughlin always felt that the word “bay” had to be capitalized, and we didn't capitalize always the word “bay”.
- Baum: So if it said “the bay,” meaning San Francisco Bay—
- Chall: Yes, we didn't always—
- Baum: We didn't capitalize it.
- Chall: I may be wrong about this, but I remember that Sylvia McLaughlin and I always disagreed on the capitalization when I was doing anything have to do with—
- Baum: Save the Bay.
- Chall: So frequently, we had to adapt our rules of spelling to please our interviewees, who had grown up with the different rules and weren't about to change.
- Baum: Right, and where we especially hit that was anybody who'd worked in the government or any institution, and they were always capitalized way more things than the *Chicago Manual of Style*. We had to—they would go through and change all the markings on their transcript, and so we just had to say, “Okay, when you do this person, the agency is capital, that's all it has to be.” [laughs]

- Chall: That's right. There were times when an interviewee would say, "I want it this way," and we would say, "Our rules are that it be spelled that way, and I think we're not going to change the rules." And so we would overcome his or her objection, but that was done very carefully, because I remember doing that from time to time, saying, "This is the way we do it, and I think you'll just have to get comfortable with it." It depended on who it was.
- Baum: Now, this is one that I did care about, and it's the series comma. Like the flag is red, comma, white, comma, and blue.
- Chall: Right. Every—
- Baum: And I know that more and more, that comma is not used, because I go through my life now, as I'm reading the newspaper and magazines, saying, They forgot their comma!
- Chall: That's right. Or having to reread the sentence to be sure that you got it.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: I know that.
- Baum: And let's see, what was the famous—oh, there was a style guide that I used, a little book by somebody, a man, it was written—oh, I should just—keep me off of these wobbly things where I can't quite remember it, because I can't—
- Chall: We liked a manual called *From Tape to Type* [Davis, Black, & MacLean, *Oral History From Tape to Type*, American Library Association, 1977], I remember, we liked that. But I don't think that was written—
- Baum: Well, that wasn't a masterpiece. This one I'm talking about is a little masterpiece.
- Chall: Oh, oh, E. B. White? Strunk and White?
- Baum: Strunk and White [*The Elements of Style*, Macmillan, 1959]. Strunk and White, and Strunk and White were very strong on the series comma, and so I went with Strunk and White.
- Chall: That's right, that's still a great book. So that's our own manual of style that we just kept renewing. We had to do it with indexes constantly.
- Baum: Yes. Dear me. Every time I looked at this, I'd argue with myself. [laughs] About these little things, and did we do them, and didn't we do them. And then we'd come to it when I was reading a finished transcript, and I'd have to go back to the style sheet, look what we decided to do, and if—

- Chall: Oh, that's right, and that's why I kept this at home.
- Baum: —I finally came to the conclusion that if we were consistent within one manuscript, that was good enough. We didn't have to be consistent throughout our office, or throughout the world. And there was a style sheet on the university. We had a university style sheet, and that was, we didn't quite use that.
- Chall: No. I think I have one that goes all the way to a discussion in—but I'm not going to give it to you—2001, so even finally at that stage, we were still working on it. That had to do with a transcriber asking, "What's the difference between a while and awhile?" And I believe it's Ann Lage who answered this question for the transcriber, so that she would know how to deal with the word. That was about 2001, so you can see that from the time we started this, and we didn't date them early in the—until right up to today, we are still struggling with style. [papers rustling]
- Baum: I remember, long ago, one of the main style questions we had was, What's a foreign word and what's an English word—I think the rule was that you underline a foreign word, because we didn't have, what do you call when you do the different kind of type for—
- Chall: Oh, italic. We didn't have italics in those days.
- Baum: We didn't have italic. So I would go downstairs to the library and ask the librarian, "How can I look up this word and see if it's a foreign—" Well, first of all, he thought I was an idiot, that anybody would know what's a foreign word or what isn't a foreign word. And then, of course, if you look in different dictionaries, it depends what year it was published probably, or some of them, because many, many of our words are of foreign derivation, but at some point they became English, and then you don't know whether it's a foreign word or not.
- Chall: And it really in the long run didn't matter, but it mattered—
- Baum: It probably didn't, but it mattered [bell rings]—it mattered to Dr. Hart. Ooh, Dr. Hart was very picky on spelling, capitalization, and he could go, his eye was so good that he could look at a whole page in one second and go to the one point that was misspelled or spelled in a different form, or something. He would be very upset about that.
- Chall: Oh, I see, so it mattered. [chuckles] Ah. [tape interruption] All right, Willa, here is one from the *Manual of Style* having to do with punctuation, spelling, numbers—
- Baum: Oh, numbers, what a chore! How to use numbers! I mean, nobody—I suppose anybody who works with manuscripts or publications knows what a headache

these things are, but to anybody else, they could not imagine the amount of time and arguments and so on—

- Chall: We spent with numbers. Spelling them out, using them as numerals—that's true. From there, we also did a great number of manuals having to do with, what should I call it, procedures, staff responsibilities, interviewers' notes, breakdown of the costs—look at those. We finally had to publish an overall manual of procedures. The start of an interview, research, where to put the folders when you have completed one step in the project, when you're transcribing; everything having to do with labeling and putting them into the correct drawers. Here you are, you can look right down that list and just list all the processes that we went through from the time we started. I think that has the total breakdown. It even includes an obituary, if there is to be one. [shuffling papers] Here we go. I think that includes the entire process.
- Baum: No, that's not the process. This just shows all the things that will be in the oral history, besides the text. And yes, what appeared on the title page. There were lots of things that changed over time; sometimes there would be a series title. We had to put the author, and the author, we considered, was the interviewee. Now, that was important for librarians, because librarians didn't know whether to list the interviewer or the interviewee in their author filings. It was terribly important. They needed to know the time, when the interviews were done. Often times, there were other interviews—in the title page, we'd say, "Including interviews with—" and there would be some other partial ones. Oh, yes, and sponsorship. Let's see. We always tried to get into the volume who funded, as thanks to the donor, but also to give full knowledge to the user of where the money came from, because they would care about that. Yes, so we worked very hard on these. Some of these things came up as, over the years, as we dealt with the Bancroft Library, and how things had to be catalogued. And then, if we had a series title, and we would put something under a series like, what, we had land and water, or what was—
- Chall: Yes.
- Baum: It had to have a specific name, and then that was a guidance for the Bancroft Library, that they could catalogue it under this thing as well as by the author, a finding aid. So there were all these—
- Chall: That increased our problems with the cataloguing, our catalogue cards.
- Baum: Oh, it did definitely.
- Chall: Now, this is a manual that deals with responsibilities of everybody, including the clerical side.
- Baum: Well, this is called "Production Routine for ROHO Oral History." It told— yes, it was for the interviewer-editors, and the administrative-clerical staff.

And this became more and more crucial as we had more and more interviews cooking, because we might have at least fifty, maybe seventy-five oral histories in different stages of production, with different members of the staff responsible to see that they came about, and they each—everybody had to do a certain, they had to do it a certain way, and they had to mark it if it was done, and they had to move it from one drawer to another, so that if one thing was done, then it moved to the drawer, the next drawer for the next step.

Chall: And eventually we had so many drawers that we had to move the cabinets into the hall.

Baum: Yes. Well, that would be true for ever and ever for any project that's ongoing and doesn't stop, either close it up and throw it away or close it down. Like, let's see. [reading manual] Oh, the first thing, it would say Invitation Letter. And then it would tell you how many invitation letters to send, who to sign it. There were model invitation letters, and how you must revise them if there was a different circumstance.

Chall: Oh, yes, that's right. We had the standard one, and then needed to revise them. As you say. I'd forgotten that. Everything was down in this manual.

Baum: Mm-hmm. And you, Malca, did most of this manual, I think.

Chall: I did the first one, that's right.

Baum: Oh, and then, a little thing like how to label the tapes. Oh, if you didn't label the tapes right, you could get yourself into hours and hours of work trying to get your tapes in order. So we'd say, let's see, well, each interview started with blank tape. You never went on—if a tape was not finished off, you didn't pick up that unused back of the tape and continue with the next interview. Interview 1, tape 1, date. Interview 1, tape 2, and the same date.

Chall: That's what I'm doing with the tapes I'm doing with you, and I hope that's still the method used, if not, the staff will be in trouble, or I will.

Baum: Yes. I hope they're doing it, and that they are very careful to do it right, because, oh, such time as you can waste.

Chall: Yes. Hunting. Okay, so that's the manual, production manual. Then we began to have lists.

Baum: [laughs] Here, in this procedures [manual], even closing tasks, and what to do with the files, what to do with one copy of the tape and another. Dear, and I remember all these things, goodness.

Chall: It's a lot of work that went into putting together an oral history. And so, at one point, just to prove the point, we had a breakdown—this is one—of the hours, the tasks that went into [producing an oral history].

Baum: Oh, yes. When we figured we were going to do a project, either a person or several persons on one subject, and we'd have to think of how much money it would cost to do that. And in order to do that, we had to make a list of every single step in a taped hour, and then multiply by the number of taped hours that we thought we'd have, and we could come out with—now, let's see. Isn't that funny, we do these without dates. People always do that, because they think that the time is always now.

Chall: I used to fuss so much about having a date. This one does have a date, when we did it.

Baum: Oh, '97. Okay. And we charged thirty-six dollars an hour editorial time, so we'd figure out how many editorial hours, and that this hour time, an editorial hour was thirty-six dollars.

Chall: And that was more, of course, than an editor received in wages. It had to do with other things, indirect costs—

Baum: That had to cover all the—not indirect costs—the costs of running the office, of employing people, of turning in their time sheets, of—

Chall: Administrative costs—

[End tape 9, side A; begin side B]

Baum: It's like when you go into the garage to get your car repaired, and your car repair is only going to be two hours mechanics' time, and they charge you seventy-five dollars an hour, and you know the mechanic doesn't get seventy-five dollars. That includes the cost of the garage and a lot of other stuff.

Chall: Rent, phone bills.

Baum: Yes. So we had to break all that down and figure it out, and then figure out how many hours approximately we were going to record, and then give an estimate of how much it would cost. Now, that was—and nothing—we were very good on how much it cost. I think it was incredible how we came out pretty accurate.

Chall: I think between the time that I showed you the ones that we did in 1966 and 1997, that we became much better at figuring what the costs were. And I think we were close. It enabled us to tell a potential donor what it was going to cost to do an interview. A series, or one, or whatever it might be. And while I think they used to cringe at the costs, when we would give them a breakdown of

some kind, to show what was involved in it—it was never this kind of breakdown, but it was always some kind of breakdown of costs—they would accept it. This is the one that I showed you in 1966, when we said a full-length interview cost \$1,000. Now, a full-length interview costs seven or eight—this five [sessions] in here costs \$11,000. So that was something that we had in our office to hand out, if we—or use as our own guide.

Baum: And we had to use it also as a guide to be sure that our interviews were going along efficiently, that somebody wasn't using way more hours than they needed to, or so on. They had to be within the range of hours that [were expected].

Chall: That's right. I don't know what this little note that you had in here is for.

Baum: Oh, this is a little note that says, the importance of keeping a word list as you interview, so that you can give the list of anything that was difficult to hear or know or spell, that followed right along as you did the recording, and that went to your transcriber. If the transcriber was on the ball—

Chall: That's right. Sometimes you'd make a beautiful list of every name spelled correctly, and you might have looked in *Who's Who*, you might have looked just anywhere to find it, and then the transcript would come back with all the names misspelled, and you'd say, "Well, didn't you look at the list that I gave you?" "Oh! Was that what that was for?" And then you would tear your hair. [laughter]

Baum: Yes, and then we'd write down in our rules about what to do: look at the transcriber's notes. [laughter] Oh, I could spend hours on each one of these things.

[talking simultaneously]

Chall: Going back into your history, all the work that went into managing the oral history. These things came as a result of your saying, "We've got to have a manual, we've got to have some other kind of style sheet." You always insisted that something be done [to improve our work]. You were always looking ahead to what was needed, and that was true of everything that I just showed you. In fact, I'll show you something else right now. [tape interruption]

Willa, here's another activity of our office that was continuous. That was making series lists. Here's a list of the Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program Oral History Series. There's a list of all the people who were interviewed, their dates of birth, and when he was interviewed, the number of pages, and the cost. This was just of that series, but often we would make lists of lists. That is, sometimes we would be called upon to tell somebody, maybe it was a library, maybe it was somebody special doing a series, maybe writing

a book, and they would want to know, for example, who are the Jewish people whom you've interviewed? And we would have to go through a number of lists, our lists of interviews, or our catalogues, to find out who were the Jewish people whom we had interviewed. Some had had nothing to do with our interviews on Jewish history, for example. Or the Jewish Women's Archive, I think, in Boston, wanted to know who were the Jewish women you've interviewed. And some of them were people we'd interviewed in other series, like women political leaders or suffragists or any number of things—community endeavors. And we would then compile those names and put them on another list. We had so many lists. You recall all of that?

Baum: Oh, right, and they were all, one, in service of the users, and in service of ourself, because when somebody asked you a question, like—well, I guess the Jewish women was one of the tough ones, because so many of the people we'd interviewed, they may or may not have been Jewish, and it may have been almost incidental to the interview.

Chall: Yes, they were, but they were Jewish—

Baum: —But this archive wanted to know, and they wanted to buy, or they wanted to use, these interviews. And so indeed, we were always doing things like that, and of course, once we did it, we printed it up and had it in files so that we wouldn't have to do this again.

Chall: Yes, that's right.

Baum: And I think it saved us a lot of trouble. We had a lot of people calling the office to figure out what we had on this or that question. And the more we could boil that down to answering, with a list or something like that—

Chall: I'm sure that's easier now, because you can put the basic list on a computer and just add to it, if you needed to. But we used to have to just do them again. When the market would change and we would have to raise the price, for example, then we'd have to do the list over again.

Baum: Oh, yes, we'd have to retype it. The price that we put was the price that it would cost for a library to order a copy. And the price was based on how many pages, it was based on Xerox cost, plus binding cost, plus shipping and handling.

Chall: That's right. Sometimes these got to be a major cost.

Baum: Well, it would depend how much—these ones here fell in between 100 and 200 pages, and they'd run from about forty-eight dollars—gee, that's—anyway, somewhere around fifty dollars, sixty dollars, for a copy.

- Chall: Eventually, we would put something out like this. This is called “New Oral Histories, Spring 1997.”
- Baum: Mm-hmm. Oh, yes, these were a delight. I was so proud of these! Suzanne Riess designed these, with our little logo there, and we put together what the new volumes, new oral histories that had come out in that year that were now available for purchase by libraries. And—well, let’s see. This one, spring of 1997, there were fifty-three.
- Chall: Yes, and they’re usually divided inside by, by the—
- Baum: By the subjects. [reading] African American leaders, architecture, art, California water resources, oh! environment, foundations and philanthropy, Jewish community, law, medicine, science, and public health, mining. We would mail these out, and my, my, in mining we put out so many in that year! Music—anyway, we would mail them out to the libraries that seemed interested in our materials. And then, in about three months, we would get tremendous orders, and the office would be inundated with getting out these volumes which we’d have to send to Xerox, get them back, get each volume looked at to be sure, because the people at Xerox were always missing a page or something, so on, send it off to bindery, get the pictures put in, oh.
- Chall: It was a big, a major job.
- Baum: It was a big thing. But we did charge enough that it covered the cost. It didn’t make any money, but it did cover the cost.
- Chall: So it was worthwhile.
- Baum: If your goal is, and our goal never was to make any money, it was always to get these done and out, and I think a lot of oral history programs, getting it out was not part of their mission. They got them done, and they’d announce it a little bit, but they didn’t want to get them out into a lot of libraries.
- Chall: Well, one of your missions was always to get them out.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: From the earliest days, from the time you started, as more and more libraries were buying them, depositing them, you made a special note of that each time you wrote a monthly log or an annual report.
- Baum: Oh, yes. We kept a running list of how many libraries ordered copies.
- Chall: Right. [tape interruption]

I think what I want to ask you about now, Willa, is what you did in terms of publicizing our office. And I think that this all came about through you. Here are various—they're in my files, therefore a lot of them are going to pertain to me—but here are—and you can just read the titles. I don't have anything from *CU News*—by the way, what does *CU News* stand for?

Baum: CU means University of California, and there's some reason why they flipped the letters, but it's the library's little newsletter, not really printed, mimeographed, or some kind of printing thing. And it went out to every office once a week.

Chall: There was a great deal of information all the time about what was going on at ROHO that came out of *CU News*, and much of the material that I have for interviewing you came out of *CU News*.

These are different. These are publications of the university, and they show—

Baum: This one is *UC Employee*, a publication of the Berkeley campus personnel office. These things came and went in different years. Sometimes they'd run it for ten years. But we tried to get our word out about what we were doing to other departments of the campus, and so we were always eager to publish anything they would take. So I see this one is introducing Malca Chall and oral history, so it's just sort of—

Chall: Oh, it's their very first one, they said, on—

Baum: It's 1975. A new series about campus employees. And then it tells what Malca Chall was hired to do, and of course, our goal is to tell not only about Malca Chall but what the oral history office does, with the hope that other departments would call on us for things they wanted interviewed or stuff they wanted to use, things like that.

Chall: Now, here's another one, this is a different publication, *University Bulletin*. This is all about, I believe it was the women political leaders, or suffragists, I'm not sure.

Baum: Publication for faculty and staff of the University of California. And this is 1975, and it went out once a week, and it was about, I think—is this Berkeley? [looking through papers] Staff of the University of California. I think most of our publications were just Berkeley. But this is wonderful, we got a whole front page on the women political leaders series, with pictures of the women that we'd interviewed. Elizabeth Gatov with Harry Truman. [laughs] So I don't know who read these. I hope that somebody read them. This is the *Monday Paper*, that's another—that was another thing—the university had the same goals we did. They wanted to keep people in touch with each other. Oh, here's the UC Women's Center lecture series. Of course, this is your file, Malca. Malca giving a speech on the California women political leaders to

women from UC Berkeley, an informal lecture discussion group, on their research. Here's the newsletter of the Friends of the Bancroft Library. That was a very good thing, because they published about four times a year to the support group for the friends of the library, which was a whole region-wide area for persons who were interested in manuscripts and history and such.

Chall: And here's one about you.

Baum: Yes, okay.

Chall: And the Oral History Office. I don't know, does it say that it was written by Suzanne?

Baum: Yes, it says—

Chall: Frequently, Suzanne did that.

Baum: Suzanne Riess. Suzanne wrote very well, and if we could get her to write something that was publishable, we were very eager. This was in 1997.

Chall: Still another.

Baum: News from the Bancroft Library. Oh, that isn't the Friends thing, but—

Chall: This was a different publication, the Bancroft Library, but it had a page on ROHO. That was, what, suffragists—

Baum: The suffragists oral history project, now on-line—well, that's 2000. Oh, that's when we first started going onto on-line, and we started with the suffragists series, because that was one that we got more researchers trying to get copies of or read from.

Chall: That wasn't dated, but I decided it was about 2000.

Baum: I think that's right. And of course, now, this week or so, why, we are going to a play by Jeannette Rankin—I mean about Jeannette Rankin—that was based on the oral histories, which again Malca did, that oral history with our first congresswoman, and this will be a two-woman play, I think. A number of our oral histories have become plays, including—

Chall: I did one, I made a play. And I think I have some publicity here on it. When the suffragists were finished and women's month, usually February, various women's organizations wanted speeches about women, and somehow, Chita and I were asked often to give little stories. So I decided one day, I'm just going to write a play. And so I went through Alice Paul and Sylvie Thygeson and all of the early suffragists whom we had, and I wrote a play. Chita would take one part and I would take the other. I have publicity here from the

newspapers. I think we went out to four or five different places, all women's organizations, and read that play. Finally Chita and I would switch roles, because we got tired of doing the same woman. It was very popular. That was my contribution to the political leaders.

Here's a very lovely piece from the *Bancroftiana*, which I think Suzanne and you wrote. I like that one, it was a tribute to Ruth Teiser after her death.

- Baum: *Bancroftiana* was the fancier newsletter of the Friends of the Bancroft Library. One of the things about the Bancroft was the collection of fine printing. Ruth Teiser and Catherine Harroun were our fine printing interviewers, and they knew all the fine printers and did—so it was a major series for us, it was a major series that the Bancroft Library Friends were interested in, and this particular issue documents Ruth Teiser when she died, 1915 to 1994. She was a very great interviewer and did a great deal to form what we specialized in.
- Chall: Her specialization was wine and fine printing.
- Baum: She and Catherine wrote a major book on the wines of California, which won a prize, Commonwealth Club prize, I think. And how did we hire people, how did we get people? I think this was Mrs. Monahan, Mary Ann Monahan, who was business officer of the library, and she also handled personnel. In those days, they had a very small administrative staff, and Mrs. Monahan came up to see me, and she said, "I've got two women here who are looking around for a sort of part-time job, and I think they'd fit in your office." So she brought up Ruth and Catherine, and they surely did fit in our office, and we just hired them—we didn't have to put in requests or this or that or anything. We just hired them, and everybody worked only by the hour. Nobody had a position. They worked—so they'd work twenty hours a month, or ten hours, whatever their project required. It was a way where we got some of our finest people, not through all the fol-de-rol of thousands of dollars in research into this and that that we used to find people. I don't know if you could do that now, I mean, aside from personnel reasons.
- Rubens: They were passionate about their subjects, too.
- Baum: Oh, they were, definitely. I mean, they were hired on their subjects. They were hired on fine printing. I don't think we hired them on wine, because we weren't interested in wine, but they were doing wine. So eventually, we moved into wine.
- Chall: When they came in, were you beginning to do fine printing, or thinking about it, or did they bring it about?
- Baum: I think they brought it about. Although as I say, it was always a major, major subject of the Bancroft Library.

Chall: Yes. But it was early that we were doing it, so they must have brought it with them.

Baum: I think they brought it, yes.

[tape interruption]

Chall: What we've been showing so far indicated a lot of hard work on the part of various members of the staff, but I think it showed Willa was always ahead of the curve, whatever you want to call that, because it was through her that we did the lists, and the publicity that we just now talked about. It didn't matter whether it was about suffrage, or about Malca Chall, it all got out in some way, and I don't think it was an accident, ever. I think Willa was always aware of what was happening. She always wrote stuff for *CU News*, and once in a while, she would say, "You just went to a conference of some kind, write it up for *CU News*," and so I would do it. And this was true of all of us. *CU News* got to know everything that was going on in ROHO. These other things are just occasional, and yet, we were in it.

Now, here's some more of the kind of work that Willa did. You wrote this, and it's in a little pamphlet for the California Historical Quarterly.

Baum: You know, I—oh, the California Historical Society, I believe, puts out a journal. And so they asked us for an article. So it's just the effort we always had to try and put things into scholarly journals or somewhere where researchers would find out that we had them. And of course, the California Historical Society, their people are exactly the people we want to hit, because that's what researchers in California history would be looking at. So it's just a little article about history on tape, the Regional Oral History Office. When was it, 1975.

Chall: I think that in addition to, I think it's a discussion by you of how we did oral history, but then I think there's a review in there, two reviews. One is by Mary Ellen Leary about the Paul Taylor interview. And somebody else had—

Baum: [shuffling papers] It is. Mary Ellen Leary was a, at that time, quite famous journalist in San Francisco. "Reflections by Scholars on the Uses of Oral History."

Chall: Who was this?

Baum: Kathryn Anderson, professor of—what is it, she's from Washington state. We just asked some researchers who happened to be around, what did they think of the oral histories. And so those two wrote it. And what was this other thing? Oh, this was a snippet of an oral history about Earl Warren. Oh, this is Pop, Pop [Merrell] Small. Pop Small was Earl Warren's closest assistant. He's telling a little story about—oh, you can't spring these things on me, because I

can't quite remember. Oh, I do remember Pop Small, he was Earl Warren's fan.

Chall: Well, I think he was his press secretary, I think he was a journalist, wasn't he?

Baum: Something like that, yes. But he came down to our office maybe once a month. He was—

Chall: He was a friend of the staff.

Baum: Yes. Some of these people became, they became our family as well as our interviewers, we had some interviewees and advisors who—.

Chall: I think Mary Ellen Leary wrote about Paul Taylor because she was writing on that subject, but Kathryn Anderson was studying the interviews with suffragists. So what we asked them to do was read our interviews, and then make a comment on them, telling how valuable they were. And so they did, and they were put it in here. Then you actually had a piece of an interview between Chita and Pop Small. But this showed how you publicized ROHO, I guess it was a handout—

Baum: Yes, we had a whole drawer of handouts. This one says, The Regional Oral History Office. When people said, "What do you do?" [laughs] We didn't want to talk to them, we just handed them a sheet of paper. There were an awful lot of people who would have liked to come in and chat with us about this and that, and we didn't want to chat with anybody unless it was strictly on business.

Chall: That also included a list.

Baum: This included the uses of oral history. We used to update this, telling what oral histories had been used for current books or something. [pause]

[End audiofile 14, begin audiofile 15 (tape 10, side A)]

Chall: We had much material that we used in the office, some very rough, maybe just typed out, or very elegant, like this one that shows in various ways the uses of oral history. Now, this is a very polished brochure. We did occasionally put out very polished brochures in our office, and that's one of them. You want to talk about that, how that came to be?

Baum: I think this is fairly recent. It doesn't have a date on it, does it?

Chall: I think it was done for the big donors party. Well, let's see, now, let's look at that again. [pause] Well, I'm not sure. And of course, there's no date on it. But it is about—

- Baum: How did I let that get out? [laughs]
- Baum: It says “handout.” Well, let’s see. Well, this was an earlier handout here. Oral history as a—and it was a beautifully printed brochure, printed by Lawton and Alfred Kennedy, and it was for the Bancroft Library to give—they had some handouts for things that they gave people about the Bancroft, and this was ours. And it lists, we listed the people that we’d interviewed—not all, but some representative memoirs and memoir series, and their sponsors. And we realized after a while that nobody knew who these people were any more, like—well, I guess they knew who Ansel Adams was, but Bernice Hubbard May, friends of the memoirist, let’s s—or, that’s who did it. Harry and Ruth Kingman, and they were great social policy leaders here in Berkeley. Everybody in Berkeley knew Harry Kingman.
- Chall: I think he was a director of the YMCA, wasn’t he?
- Baum: He was director of Stiles Hall. But even Sara Bard Field, Oscar Lewis, Walter Lowdermilk, times marched on and people didn’t even know who they were. John Francis Neylan. You have to keep updating your people, because you’re only famous about ten years, you’re really famous. Later on, the same thing was done in an even more elegant thing, and they had pictures of a lot of them—
- Chall: Are you getting the—yes, mm-hmm. Yes, that’s a beauty.
- Baum: Yes. A lot of these—I always, when I come to these beautiful things, I have to credit Suzanne Riess. The other person who did a lot on our publication sort of stuff was Harriet Nathan. She wrote little brochures and things and did a very graceful writing job.
- Chall: Yes. Now, this was a much later handout, and it was for a particular group of people, I think they were—
- Baum: Well, this was done for judges—“Saving Yesterday Today for Tomorrow, a Guide to Oral History for the Bench and Bar.” And Carole Hicke was our legal interviewer, and she was doing a series on the Ninth Judicial Circuit court—no, that’s not the one she did. That’s a different oral history. We did a whole lot of oral history for the—oh, isn’t that terrible?—San Francisco—one of the courts, we’ve done about twenty oral histories for them, and Carole did them all. And then this is what she’s put together—
- Chall: It’s a very good compilation of how we work, do oral history at ROHO.
- Baum: But it’s handed out to judges, or people who were documenting courts. And it became popular about 1990. I think that suddenly the various courts began to think they needed to document themselves, and so this booklet Carole wrote

for the Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society, which was not ours. And they published it—

Chall: It's very fine. It's a very fine piece of work.

Baum: Yes, it's very good.

Chall: Okay, those were some of our handouts. Now—[tape interruption]

Baum: When we were talking about the *CU News*, I thought I was clever getting all these things into *CU News*, people in the library knew us. The library is a vast network of librarians, most of whom don't know each other. They all work in different departments. And then word came to me that I'd better cool it, because there were people who were becoming jealous of the oral history office and how much fun the oral historians were having, because they were always out speaking, or they'd done something or other. So we kind of started to soft-pedal ourselves. So there's a lot of jealous quacking in the library, although certainly we supported ourselves, didn't take away from any department. [laughs] [tape interruption]

Chall: Here's some kind of publicity that we got. This came out of the *Oakland Tribune*, the *Daily Review*, and maybe a Berkeley paper. And it's all about, the early ones are about the—first of all, about the oral history office, this one's just about the—you can open that, Willa, if you want to.

Baum: [laughing] Mrs. Harold Chall, and—

Chall: This is publicity that came to the office, just because it came. I guess people began to hear about us. This one's about Chita and me, and it's about oral history basically.

Baum: It's a Hayward newspaper, and you two lived near—

Chall: Yes, both of us were well known in the Hayward area.

Baum: That's right, Mrs. Harold Chall and Mrs. Hilary Fry, and they were working for the oral history office at the University of California, and then it tells about the interesting things they did. And what is interesting as I read about it is that Chita, especially, had her own professional name. She was Amelia Fry. And they would not publish anything about her unless they used her husband's name. It was one of their style things, and she had to be Mrs. Hilary Fry, and Malca couldn't be Malca Chall, she had to be Mrs. Harold Chall.

Chall: That's right. You'll notice that a few years later, there was some publicity about Chita and me, and they used our first names.

- Baum: [laughs] So that shows something about the changing situation of women working.
- Chall: Yes, it did, that's right.
- Baum: Yes. No, this was great.
- Chall: That was good publicity. And then—
- Baum: And this is just getting out into the community.
- Chall: That's right.
- Baum: Women's history put on tape.
- Chall: Then this is another one, and this has to do with, this shows Gaby and you—
- Baum: And let's see, Gabrielle Morris and Willa Baum—no, it was so—and that was 1976. This is a Berkeley—no, no, this is the *Los Angeles Times*. Oh, I remember Harriet Styx; she was a journalist. She came up and interviewed us from Los Angeles. I see that I'm Willa Baum, and Gaby is Gabrielle Morris, and we don't have any husbands' names. So they must have been considerably advanced over the *Hayward Review*. [laughs]
- Chall: Well, I think it's a different date, too.
- Baum: No, this is '75. Who is that? [cross-talk]
- Chall: Okay, and then go on, Willa, just open them up and—[pages turning] Oh, there's another one.
- Baum: Malca. [laughs]
- Chall: Now, that, I think, is when Chita and I were doing our play.
- Baum: Oh, yes.
- Rubens: What was the name of the play, Malca?
- Chall: I don't remember. I have it at home, but I don't remember what I called it.
- Baum: My, this is the *Oakland Tribune*, 1975. Look how young you two girls are!
- Chall: I know it, I know.
- Baum: Isn't that—[laughter]

Here's the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and Julia Porter. That's one of your interviewees. An article by Ruthe Stein. She's still writing for the—and that's 1976. I'm still reading her articles in the *Chronicle*. That's interesting, here she picked out that Vera Schultz had—Turn off the tape recorder a couple—
[tape interruption]

- Chall: I didn't do these interviews. These were done by a couple of—these were done by the staff. I put a couple of our staff on interviews of local women.
- Baum: Oh, yes, oh, yes.
- Chall: And I had a small staff [our own ROHO interviewers] and I parceled out things. Those who couldn't travel much, I gave them the local women. But those were two women who were, I believe, on—one of them was in San Francisco, a prominent politician, and the other one was on the Marin County Board of Supervisors, I think. So we were doing women who had been prominent in local politics, and also women in Republican, Democratic, Communist party politics. And minorities, so that we tried very hard to cover—
- Baum: Here's a price listed here, it said that you had \$74,000 for the women political leaders, from individual contributions and a matching grant from NEH, National Endowment for the Humanities. And it says the cost of a single memoir ranges from \$5,000 to \$8,000. So it was going up rapidly. It really was. I mean, suddenly the world just changed. I can't quite remember how fast the world changed.
- Chall: We all got raises occasionally.
- Baum: Not much.
- Chall: Not much, but every few cents—
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: And here's one from—I think—
- Baum: Where is this, the *Chronicle*? Oh, in 2004. So this is current, and this is about the Richmond shipyard—
- Chall: Yes, Rosie the Riveter.
- Baum: Oh, yes, it does tell about our interviews a little bit.
- Chall: I think Richard Cándida Smith is quoted here. So it is after the change of administration. But it shows that ROHO is still getting some publicity at that time.

- Baum: Right. Wonder who—usually you don't get publicity unless you really go after it. I wonder who's going after it now. [pause] [several tape interruptions]
- Chall: Now I'm going to show you something that just came out of our office and didn't go anywhere, except to people in our office. Had nothing to do with oral history. But it was part of the fun of our office, because every now and then we would have parties in the office, to celebrate a birthday or something. So this was our recipe book that came out of—that was compiled by Jaynelle—
- Baum: Jaynelle Bell!
- Chall: Jaynelle Bell. Talk about Jaynelle Bell, and how we got this recipe book out.
- Baum: Well, Jaynelle, I believe, I believe she was head of our—front desk woman?
- Chall: I think so.
- Baum: Or she may have come in, but anyway, she was a most energetic lady. She was a black woman, and she was—let's see. Eventually she left us and went to law school, and now she's a distinguished lawyer. But she wanted to do this recipe book. So we all had to contribute a recipe—gosh, they're good recipes.
- Chall: Yes, we were all supposed to contribute the ones that usually we brought to our parties, and we used to have quite a few parties in the office, for birthdays, and other celebrations. Willa used to get a little restive about this, parties in the office, because she felt that we were maybe wasting time. But [laughter] we were enjoying ourselves. And once in a while—and Jaynelle was the one who made sure that we had parties very often. More often when Jaynelle was on the staff.
- Baum: Yes.
- Chall: Did you hold up the front of this recipe book?
- Baum: They're really good recipes, too.
- Chall: Yes, they are. [laughter]
- Baum: I've got to read mine, but—yes, I did not much approve of our parties, because I thought the people, while we were working on parties, we were usually checked in. We used the time clock; we came in, and we were in, and we were going to be paid for that. So I didn't think that could be charged against whatever project we were charging ourselves against. I was sort of a killjoy on that particular subject. But we didn't do it too much. We didn't do it like some offices; I smell them cooking every week. Well, it's just one of the things that I remember about Jaynelle. She was a super—she was very good.

- Chall: Yes, she was fun.
- Baum: We've had some marvelous front desk people.
- Chall: Well, let's see. I have finally, before I do that, because I'm going to show a lot of that, here's something that—[Baum laughs] Do you see this t-shirt? Well, this is a t-shirt for ROHO, and it has ROHO's logo on it. What I would like to ask Willa is, how did that logo come about? Because it's on everything. It's on our brochures, it's on our catalogues, it's on a t-shirt, it's on these little newsletters that we put out. How did that logo come about?
- Baum: I can't remember when we first used it. But I think it was probably that little brochure that Lawton Kennedy did for us.
- Chall: Oh, that might have been the first one?
- Baum: We wanted a logo, and Lawton Kennedy did the printing for Bancroft Library. He usually used some kind of little medieval print or something, so I think I asked Suzanne to find us a print. She went down to somewhere in the Bancroft and got out a whole bunch of books of medieval prints, and she found this. We liked it so much that it's become ours.
- Chall: Yes, it did.
- Baum: Yes. And every time I look at it, I love it. So again, in all of our visual things, I think Suzanne Riess is probably behind them. Including photography, she did photography.
- Chall: Yes. One of our major efforts in the last, about 1990s, we put out a—this is [pause, papers rustle] let's see. I don't know whether this was—this is newsletter number one [Fall 1991]. It's the Regional Oral History Office, and it was, well, it was also an announcement that "The Friends of the Bancroft Library and the Regional Oral History Office invite you to a reception honoring the noted Californians who have recorded their oral histories and those who helped make these oral histories possible. Sunday, November 3, 1991, from three to five in the Heller Reading Room of the Bancroft Library." How—and not only did we get money to put this out, but there's all kinds of publicity on it.
- Baum: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.
- Chall: There's an article about it in the *Bancroftiana*. There's an article about it by Julie Shearer in the *Cal Report/Winter 1992*, and I don't know what kind of a magazine that is. Do you want to give us some background on that major celebration? How it came about?

- Baum: Yes, and you know, you're catching me with—I can't remember why we decided to do it at this time.
- Chall: I'm sure you decided.
- Baum: Well, there must have been an event.
- Chall: Oh, it was, I remember—
- Baum: No, but there must have been a reason why we had it at this time. Because we invited every interviewee we'd ever interviewed.
- Chall: And donors.
- Baum: And donors. And it says [in both articles that] more than three hundred people came. It was a big crowd. And our chief star was [Governor Edmund G.] Pat Brown. Pat Brown and Mrs. Brown and the Brown sons, son, was there. It was just a splendid event. And you know, I can't remember why we did it, but it was so good. People were so pleased to meet each other. And we had pictures all over, we had the blue books, the oral histories in the reading room in the Bancroft Library. They were stacked around in heaps by subject matter, and there were pictures by subject matter—
- Chall: We had posters—
- Baum: Yes, we had posters. Again, I think Suzanne's work. And then we went into the, what's the name of our reading room?
- Chall: Heller Reading Room.
- Baum: No, the one—Morrison Room. In the Morrison Room was food and—or maybe that was another—
- Chall: No, I think that was another reception, because I think everything was in the Bancroft reading room.
- Baum: Okay. Anyway, it was just a wonderful affair, and what was its date? November 1991. And I can't tell you any much more about it.
- Chall: Do you think it was because you felt it was time to make people aware of what we had accomplished? Do you think that maybe Dr. Hart or the library was beginning to make—
- Baum: Notice. Or not notice. I can't remember, Malca—
- Chall: —beginning to look askance at us—not as concerned about what we were doing as you felt they should be? Maybe we were—

- Baum: Oh, I don't think that ever the library nor the Bancroft Library was very much interested in oral history. They were definitely paper-oriented, books and papers. And we were still, probably still are—
- Chall: Costing money.
- Baum: Yes. Except I always thought, why should they care, because we brought in the money. So I can't remember whether it had any good—it helped cement our relations with our interviewees, and I don't know as that did anything in the long run, if you want to talk about dollars and cents or something. But our interviewees were a part of our family, especially they'd be related to the interviewer or interviewers in their subject. We'd often, sometimes have special parties for that group, especially mining, we did. So I don't know as it brought in any money or any material advantage. But it always made me very pleased to be doing oral history, because I could see how pleased the persons who were interviewed, and the people who used the oral histories, none of which were necessarily material advantages.
- Chall: Well, now that I think about it, I remember that most of the people came from the Bay Area, lived around here, but two of my interviewees came up from Los Angeles, Harvey Schechter and his wife, whom I interviewed, Hope. Hope Mendoza Schechter. And from San Diego, Wanda Sankary, who was one of the earliest women I interviewed for the women political leaders project. She flew up, and someone took her back to the airport at the end of the day. But those people came up because they wanted to be a part of it. I thought that was very exciting.
- Baum: Later on, we had some parties, receptions, presentations, at the [UC] president's house. We had one for Willie Brown; we had another one, I can't quite remember. But sometimes the whole university got involved. That was nice.
- Chall: The various honorable presentations, we have talked about. Here's one that we did in honor of Mrs. [Frances] Albrier, and I remember how hard that was to put together. [chuckles] We had it in the Women's Faculty Club, I believe, and you got Dr. Hart there, and several of the black professors on campus to come to the luncheon and give speeches. I gave a little speech too, but it was a different kind of presentation. You did get Dr. Hart to come. [Many of Mrs. Albrier's friends, too.]
- Baum: That's right, we got—
- Chall: That wasn't always easy.
- Baum: No, I think we were low on Dr. Hart's totem pole. But there was somebody there from the National Endowment for the Humanities, I remember.

- Chall: I think so.
- Baum: And they're the ones who helped fund that. And I do remember that Ruth Hill and Brother Blue, her husband—
- Chall: Were they there?
- Baum: They were there from Radcliffe. Ruth Hill was in charge of the Radcliffe women's oral history project. [laughs] That's pretty funny.
- Chall: That was worthwhile, because when we found out that Radcliffe was interested and they were doing their own black women's oral history project, we tied into that one. I believe they paid for the transcription, they paid for some area of it, I forget what.
- Baum: Yes, I think they—
- Chall: And so it became a part of their project too. That was another tie-in, and I remember the tie-in came because you were reading the Radcliffe paper, or newsletter, whatever they sent out, and found out that they were doing their own black history project, and so you said, "Why don't we find a way to tie in to that, to get some money for Mrs. Albrier's project"? And so we did.
- Baum: We had a hard time to get the money for Mrs. Albrier, because while she was greatly honored, everybody respected her, none of her people who respected her were rich. [laughs] We did better when we had wealthy people who were honored. Mrs. Albrier was a teacher.
- [End tape 10, side A, begin side B]
- Chall: Here are a few letters that came to us as a result of our reaching out about ROHO.
- Baum: Well, this thanks you for a review you did of *Foxfire* magazine.
- Chall: Right.
- Baum: And signed by all kinds of important people. But that's 1972. Wow.
- Chall: You remember *Foxfire*?
- Baum: I do remember *Foxfire*, and Eliot Wigginton.
- Chall: Yes. And you had asked me to write a review of the latest, one of the *Foxfire* magazines, and so I did it. I'm always a reluctant writer, but I did it. And this was a lovely letter that came back.

- Baum: It is. But where's your review?
- Chall: I don't have the review [July 1972 issues of *Forest History*].
- Baum: Oh, dear! [laughter] Here's another—mmm. Here's where you did the, you wrote the biography of Frances Albrier, and what was the journal? [both talking, pages turning]
- Chall: It was an encyclopedia, I believe it was of women.
- Baum: No, it's *American National Biography*, [reading] "A new biographical dictionary that will contain approximately 20,000 biographies of persons who played significant roles in every aspect of American history". Wow.
- Chall: Oh, yes, they asked me to write a biographical sketch of Mrs. Albrier. It was interesting for me, because I think it was to be done in—I forget, it tells in here—x number of words. I sent it in, and their editing was very interesting. Just the way they changed the words around. I mean, it was a top-notch job of editing. They sent it back to me. I revised it, and then told them that I was trying to get it into the number of words that they'd asked for, but I'd left a few things, I think, in brackets, and they could take them out if they wanted to, if it was going to be too long. So that's the article that went in.
- Baum: *American National Biography*, you should Xerox it. Hmm.
- Baum: And that's the bibliography. Boy, that's a job, to write one of those.
- Chall: It was, it was. And it was an interesting assignment.
- Now, this is a, this came out of a journal, I believe it was the—it's a book review of—
- Baum: *How the Jews Invented Hollywood* is a well-known book by Neil Gabler [*An Empire of Their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood*, Doubleday, 1989], and this is a book review. Oh, it's about Rabbi [Edgar] Magnin. Rabbi Magnin! And oh, you had such a time interviewing him. [laughs]
- Chall: This is a review of a book by the editor of the *Western Jewish History Quarterly*. He just pulled out a segment that pertained to Rabbi Magnin. And you asked me to check it out and see that the author, of *How the Jews Invented Hollywood*, had given us credit. And I never did look. So all I have is the article, and someday I thought, well, I'll look—I didn't think it was going to be in my local library, so I just never bothered. But I probably should some day.
- Because we did have, we had forms for use of footnotes and bibliography that we gave to authors who were writing books using our oral history. Now, if

they didn't bother to let us know, of course, we couldn't know that, and this one hadn't. So we were just curious to know whether he'd used it.

Rubens: So who interviewed Rabbi Magnin?

Baum: Malca.

Chall: I did. I interviewed Rabbi Magnin.

Baum: She had a very funny time! [laughs] Oh, but you'll have to tell it, Malca, I can't remember.

Rubens: You interviewed Rabbi Magnin from Los Angeles?

Chall: Yes. It was part of our Jewish history series. Rabbi Magnin had grown up in Stockton, or grown up—I guess in San Francisco, actually. He was related, a close relation, of the Magnin, of the I. Magnin's stores. His mother was, I believe—well, I forgot now—I guess his grandmother. And his first pulpit had been in Stockton. So he was considered somebody that you should interview. I was doing some Jewish interviews at the time, and I went down to Los Angeles and visited Rabbi Magnin.

Now, he was in a very large temple there, synagogue, and he had an office, and he had an outer office, and he had a huge cupboard—well, it was a closet—that was full of his scrapbooks, because some loving ladies over the years had clipped every article about him in the newspapers and made scrapbooks. When I told him what I was here to do, he said, "Just go in there and read the scrapbooks." So for many—I used to go down once a month, and for several periods of time, I just read scrapbooks and made notes, almost the way I've been doing to interview Willa. Go back into the history and just jot down notes. And then I started my interviews.

Now, Rabbi Magnin was a very busy man. For the first few interviews, the phone would ring all the time in his office, and he would answer the telephone. So finally, after one of them, I went into his outer office and I told his secretary, who became a very good friend of mine, "I cannot interview like this. You'll just have to shut off the phone while I'm in there for an hour and a half, three hours—just shut off the phone." Which she did.

But it was interesting, because for several months, he would just notice this woman sitting at a card table in his front office with his secretary, going through books, and he would sometimes say, "Who is that woman?"

Baum: And it was you.

Chall: "Who is that woman in the front office working on the books"? When it came finally time to interview him, he was a very—he was fun to interview. He was

serious, and he was—but he was so used to being interviewed by the press that it would take him a little time to realize that this was an in-depth study. It turned out that, we got compliments on it, that we really did capture his style, his personality.

And in so doing, I went around to visit quite a number of people who'd been on his board over the years and who knew him well, and one of the men I interviewed decided that he wanted an interview himself, and so we got Walter Hilborn out of that. He was a major attorney in Los Angeles whose father had, I believe, had something to do with the invention of the Gillette razor. So there we have it.

Baum: And I remember, you told me that Rabbi Magnin said, "Jesus Christ, I'm glad I'm a Jew!" [laughter]

Chall: I don't remember that!

Baum: Don't you remember that? I thought that was the best quote. [laughter]

Chall: I believe he gave the benediction, either that or the opening prayer, for one of Richard Nixon's inaugurals. He was considered a friend of, a major friend of all the big people of the Los Angeles area, and as a result, I even interviewed Cardinal [James] McIntyre. Cardinal McIntyre knew Rabbi Magnin well, and he agreed to let me go and talk to him. So I went into Cardinal McIntyre's sanctum sanctorum, and then we talked about Rabbi Magnin. Little things.

Baum: We were working with the Magnes Museum here, and we did hope, plan, to get eventually a branch of the Magnes Museum's Jewish history, which we did, down in southern California. It didn't ever work out that way. And I don't know still if they've got a Jewish oral history down there.

Chall: I don't know. So—[tape interruption] There are some articles about oral history that I happened to save that would be printed in reprints, and so you see this one from Charlie Morrissey, and what's his name, Hand—

Baum: Samuel Hand, yes, but this would be [chuckles]. [pause] Well, I don't think we need to cover that.

Chall: All right. So those are just ephemera.

Rubens: Have you talked about the book yet, the writing of the book?

Baum: No.

Chall: No, we haven't.

[End audiofile 15, end of session]

Interview with Willa Baum
 Interviewed by Eleanor Swent
 Interview 9: April 6, 2005
 [Begin audiofile 16]

16-00:00:00

- Swent: This is April 6, 2005. I'm interviewing Willa Baum. We're sitting here at her breakfast table, with the parrot in the background. You've been interviewed by two other people, Germaine LaBerge and Malca Chall, and you've covered a lot of topics. One of the things that I thought we might start with, because that's when I met you first, I think, was when you were advising the Oakland Neighborhood Oral History Project. And that you were doing simply as an expert; that was apart from your ROHO responsibilities.
- Baum: Yes, I can't remember why, and I do remember the young lady who was doing it. What was her name, do you remember?
- Swent: Kitty Hughes?
- Baum: Kitty Hughes, and her husband was a poet, well-known poet. Somehow I knew him before. Anyway.
- Swent: It was sponsored by the Camron-Stanford House in Oakland. That's where it operated.
- Baum: It operated from, but was it not the California Council for the Humanities?
- Swent: Well, it had funding from the California Council for the Humanities, yes. And you and Charles Wollenberg and a couple of other professors were the advisors.
- Baum: There was a very good man from geography. [bird speaks in background]
- Swent: Transportation expert.
- Baum: Yes. Well, anyway, I only remember that we—I didn't do much about it. I mean, I guess we met, and argued about questions and what to do. And it went forward. And how did—you were an interviewer?
- Swent: I was an interviewer.
- Baum: But we didn't meet with the interviewers. The main thing I remember about that project, I think they got—I read the interviews and thought they were good. And then they had a final event at the Camron-Stanford House by Lake Merritt, and that was a nice affair that they invited all the community persons, and I think the persons who were interviewed were around Fruitvale, weren't they?

- Swent: We did West Oakland and Fruitvale. They were hoping to do Chinatown, and then they didn't have enough funding to do that.
- Baum: But we had a nice party at the end, and music, and food, and about two people from the neighborhood came, and nobody else, so not any of the interviewees, that I remember. Do you remember it otherwise?
- Swent: No, I don't remember.
- Baum: And so I thought it was the conclusion, or what the effect of it as an event was unhappily—I mean—well, it was a nice event. Nobody came.
- Swent: Not an important event.
- Baum: Hardly, and part of the purpose was to get the neighborhood people to know about their neighborhood, and then to use the materials. Well, I don't know what happened to the materials, but I think nothing. I think they're stored in the Camron-Stanford somewhere.
- Swent: I think that's right. Some of them, I think they duplicated the tapes, and put the tapes in the Oakland Library history room. And so far as I know, they've never been used for anything. Just really didn't come to anything at all. A lot of them were not even transcribed.
- Baum: And so that has made me dubious about a lot of projects, in that they don't have any plan for their use, and they're not effectively used for what they wanted to do, which was to bring the community together, and to know who their forebears in the neighborhood were. And I think that that was—failed. I always thought the California Council for the Humanities, I may have the name wrong here, they always did it that way. They didn't emphasize at all getting them completed and put into libraries and publicized in a way that scholars could use them. Now, I may be wrong, since my [telephones ringing]—ignore that—I think that as I went through the oral history stuff and talked about it and went to conferences and all, that for a lot of people, the emphasis on using them was not—was just not there.
- Swent: They think as far as doing the taping, and then that's that.
- Baum: Yes. I just heard one of my younger friends, the oral historian at Mills College has got a plan for a book that she's presented, she's given to the publisher, and it's how to catalogue and use oral history. She is a librarian by training, and so she's interested in the final use of this, and I just pray that that happens.
- Swent: Were you advisor to a lot of other projects? Were you often asked to do this?
- Baum: I don't think so. [laughs] I don't remember especially doing it. You know, there's too much noise here, Lee, isn't there?

- Swent: It's pretty noisy. [voices in background, and the parrot continues] That's Shirley on the phone, I think. The bird is probably—
- Baum: The bird is the worst. [to bird]: Butchie!
- Swent: Do you want me to unplug it?
- Baum: Undo me. I think we'd better go upstairs, Lee. Because this is going to happen—bells are going to ring, mailmen are going to come, and ask for my signature, you know. [tape interruption]
- Swent: All right, we're continuing, then.
- Baum: Regarding Butchie, and trying to shut up the bird here, the parrot. One of the very first interviews I did was with Dr. Newell Perry, and he was a founder of the blind school, and he was a blind guy. I think he was a mathematician. Anyway, he was an elderly gentleman, and he rocked. He sat in his rocking chair and rocked back and forth while we did our interviews, and all through the interview you hear Squeak, Squeak, Squeak, Squeak...
- Swent: [laughs] Well, those are things that make it exciting.
- Baum: Oh! And Dr. Perry was such a dear man, I mean. The wonderful thing about oral history is the people you get to meet. And after a while, when I got out of interviewing and just administration, I really didn't get to meet the people in the same close way that the interviewer does. I did get to meet some of them, through the presentations of the final—or even planning the interview. So I still know those people, some of whom have died recently, and it's just always a tragedy as far as I'm concerned.
- 16-00:10:02
Baum: It isn't a tragedy, because they were old and they were illustrious, *and* we got their story.
- Swent: That makes you feel good.
- Baum: That makes me feel so good, yes. Okay, go on with what you had planned.
- Swent: Well, let's talk about presentations; that was one of the things I wanted to talk about a bit. We used to do great presentations. What was the point of that?
- Baum: You know, I can't remember when we started, because when we first, in our first interviews, when we finished, we gave them their transcript and shook hands, and that was it. Put it in the Bancroft Library. Oh, I think maybe the first one was with Dr. Lowdermilk. That was Malca's, and I think I talked about that in the interview with her. But Dr. Lowdermilk was much beloved over the world—not the whole world, but especially in Israel and the Middle

East. In the Middle East, he'd done a lot of—he planned dams and water projects. So when we finished the oral history, he was getting along in years. Malca thought to have a presentation in his honor, and the Magnes Museum was pleased to be the place. It was a magnificent event. People came from the Middle East to honor him, and some people came from South America.

Swent:

My!

Baum:

And they all came to the Magnes Museum, and Dr. Lowdermilk stood up and talked, and everybody—oh! it was heartwarming to see him greeted and honored by people he'd helped so many years ago. And about a week or two after that, he had a stroke, or something, that he continued to be alive but not mentally competent. And so it was like a fantastic finale to a fantastic humanitarian life. We suddenly saw that we could do something more, that we could honor these people in a way that they cared about, which was to have their friends and their colleagues come, and so then we've always since then tried to have an event sponsored by their colleagues in some way. It's never—it wasn't usually by the University of California, it was some place, some club, some something that they had been very close to. And now I think back on it and I think, you know, that was one of the valuable things that we did, was to bring recognition to these people while they were still alive, and to have an event that their friends could gather and talk to them. And of course, then their friends wanted to read the book. [laughs]

I realized also that part of why we had presentations was that, as time went on, we had less and less money from the university, and we had to raise most of the money for the oral histories. And one of the ways to raise it was for people to see, at a presentation, what an oral history was, and then maybe somebody who had been at the presentation would think to honor somebody in their group that way. So it was sort of a publicity thing.

Swent:

Yes, outreach.

Baum:

Outreach, Yes. We might have not thought of it if we'd—

Swent:

Because they were kind of expensive sometimes, weren't they?

Baum:

The presentations?

Swent:

Well, I'm thinking the invitations, mailing out notices and all of that. There was considerable expense involved in the presentations.

Baum:

Yes. I guess there was time involved. We usually tried to get the club or whatever was doing it to do a lot of that, and they did. Which was also part of the outreach, because then those particular institutions would sponsor an oral history themselves. But it was the fun part, and that's where I got to meet a lot

of those people that as the administrator I never would have gotten to meet them otherwise.

Swent: One of the people that you interviewed, you interviewed in the office, was—who was it?—Earl Warren was interviewed at the ROHO office. Was this kind of unusual, to interview people in the office?

Baum: Oh, Yes, it wasn't a regular interview. We had been working on Earl Warren for some years—the project, the Earl Warren project was already going forward, and we were interviewing persons from his administration as governor. It was to document him as governor of California. Earl Warren had made it a condition of okaying the project that he would not talk about the Supreme Court. He was then chief justice of the Supreme Court, and he felt that was privileged material. And then, he was not going to do his own oral history until he had finished a book which he was writing, which was his memoirs, because he didn't want to influence what he would say.

But, we kept saying, “You know, we've interviewed a lot of your people, but we don't have—a lot of things are controversial issues, and we need your input on what we need to ask about. Because by the time we finish the project and you're ready to be interviewed, we won't have had your input on what was terribly important in your mind that we could ask these people about.” Okay, so finally he agreed that he would do an interview which was not really an interview, it was just to point up to us— it was not even to be used—what was important, the events that he thought were really important, and so we gathered. First of all, we had—each of these things took years—to persuade him that we could, that he would allow himself to be tape recorded. He was only used to working with court reporters. He wanted us to have a court reporter take it down.

We tried to find a court reporter, and court reporters were very expensive. Our project was dangling along on a little teeny bit of money. So then finally, he agreed that we could tape record him. We set it up in that middle room in our office, and there were about five or six or seven of us there, because each interviewer on the Earl Warren project had a special subject. I know Malca had water issues, which were a big one. I can't remember what each interviewer's project—but each interviewer had certain subjects that she was going to document, and so we set it up, each person was allowed to ask Earl Warren a couple of questions, and Earl Warren was there with his chief—the guy who'd been with him all the time, who was—[pause] oh, I'm not sure... I can't think of his name. But he was the man who'd been with him throughout his being district attorney here in Alameda County, and—

Swent: Not Meese?

Baum: Oh, no, Meese was a young twerp.

Swent: Okay. [laughter]

16-00:20:00

Baum: Compared to these old guys. Oh, dear. Wait a minute, I know what will— [mumbling] Hang on a minute, I've got a directory, a catalogue of—[gets catalogue, interruption]

Olney. I'll get his first name. He had gone on to Washington with Earl Warren when Earl Warren went to the Supreme Court, and became administrator. The Supreme Court administrates all the federal courts of the United States, and Mr. Olney was chief administrator of that. Warren Olney. Warren Olney III.

Swent: So there were a lot of people in that little room.

Baum: So Warren Olney was there, flanking Earl Warren, and also his editor, the man who was his editor working with him on his biography, who was also a Cal man and—these are all Cal men. I mean, the thing that bound them together was having gone to the University of California long, long ago. And I forget who the—Nichols. Nichols. Because we didn't interview him, so I won't have it [the spelling] in here. He was—

Swent: Did Olney participate, did he speak up also?

Baum: Oh, yes! [laughter] And so we got the most interesting tales, mostly between Earl Warren and Warren Olney, telling about some of the exciting events that happened in their administration. Of course, a lot of them were when they were district attorney, when Earl Warren was district attorney, because they had raids on gambling and dog racing and all kinds of things, and Earl Warren and Warren Olney were participants in them. They were big events.

And then, when we'd talked for about two hours or so in that room, then it was time for lunch. We'd set up lunch. So we all trotted over to the Faculty Club for lunch, and I remember I walked along with Earl Warren. He was talking about, he felt that the thing that hurt his feelings badly was the graffiti, especially in Washington, there was a lot of damage to the buildings, like the Supreme Court building, and the people smeared awful things on it, and he thought that was an insult to the government, and sort of represented a lack of respect that he thought was a bad thing in society.

What else? People were always asking him about the Japanese internment, and he wouldn't say much about that. He later came out and said publicly that he thought it was a terrible mistake. Although at the time, and which we documented, it was not so clear that these people were not dangerous, because we did look with the people who headed the—with the men, I guess these were all men, not people [laughter]—the internment, and we looked at the maps they looked at, and they had, the maps were all the military—where California's military bases were and so on. And right around every base were

Japanese farmers, all surrounding it. It was just perfectly obvious if you looked at these maps, that this was a danger point, and that they were set up in every single place of defense, defense—of course, the reason was because the defense places were in places [tape skips] lived with, and not very good land, and the Japanese were the only people who would farm around there.

Swent: But if they had been hostile, it would have been a danger.

Baum: It would have been, yes. But you don't—it's so much easier to know what's right when it's all over.

Swent: Yes. Did he allow you then to use this interview?

Baum: He died. He was still working on his biography, and he died before he finished his biography. His autobiography. So we did eventually use this choppy thing; we just called it "Conversations with Earl Warren" or something, and told in the beginning, in the interview history, how it happened, that it was not really a—we were planning that each one of these interviewers would sit with Earl Warren very quietly as usual, and talk in depth about their subjects with him. And he was preparing to do that.

Swent: This was to be a preliminary session.

Baum: Yes, it was all preliminary.

Swent: But you didn't get beyond that.

Baum: And it was lucky we had that, because when Earl Warren—first of all, we gave Earl Warren the transcripts of that, all these things he could use as he was putting together his own autobiography. And then his editor, Nichols, what was his first name?—could use that interview, and he finished up the autobiography using these materials from Earl Warren.

Swent: Good.

Baum: Now, later people have read this patchy, but it's a fairly big book, because we talked a number of hours. I think it was only one session, the only session we had with Earl Warren that was recorded. But it made a big book, and people said how interesting that was, and how dull his autobiography was. [laughter] Which shows why oral history is sometimes more fun, more spontaneous, and that a very well-contained, a man who only gave judicial opinions, like Earl Warren could be very stuffy when he wrote his autobiography, and very fun when he was just speaking.

Swent: Just in conversation.

Baum: Yes.

- Swent: But that's the reverse—usually people want to do the oral history first, and then they do the autobiography, don't they?
- Baum: That's what we tried to talk him into. We kept saying, "You can use the whole oral history, and just reorganize it however you want it for your autobiography." Well, so that's that.
- Swent: But that's another case of being grateful that you got it in time.
- Baum: Oh, yes, yes.
- Swent: Well, I was wondering if there were any other people that you interviewed in the office, but that wasn't really a scheduled interview.
- Baum: No, it wasn't. We didn't—we did interview people once in a while, but not in our office, because goodness, there were people coming and going, there's no way you could do that. I think sometimes we'd get a little room from the library that we could interview, but we didn't usually, and we said it was because we meant the people were more comfortable in their own office, or their home. Now, that was only one of the reasons. The reason was that we had no office. [laughter] No place that they could come.
- One of the interviews that I didn't do that was in our office, and I shouldn't say office, it was somewhere in the library, and there were all kinds of things going on—I didn't do it and I don't remember, but I know that there was painting and things going on in the building, and Chita [Fry] was interviewing Newton Drury. Newton Drury became one of our closest advisors and helpers.
- 16-00:30:07
Baum: But at this time, which was very early, when Chita had just met Newton Drury, he was—
- Swent: He was Sierra Club, wasn't it?
- Baum: Not Sierra—no, state parks, he was director of state parks. And he was a close friend and classmate of Earl Warren's. It's through Newton Drury and some of those other close classmates that we were able to do Earl Warren. But, at this point, Newton Drury was a stranger, and for some reason, he didn't want to do it in his house, so Chita set up that she'd do it in a room in the library. And there was lots of noise and painting and whatever, and finally, somehow they hung up canvases, I think canvases that the painters were using, around themselves and tried to do it in a little tent in there. It was to try and not have too much noise. And she said it was a terrible situation, and she and Newton Drury laughed so much about it, they became close friends. It's probably that bad situation that—[laughter]
- Swent: Drew them together.

- Baum: —meant that Newton Drury became our closest helper. So you never can tell what's a good place to do the interview.
- Swent: That's right. The Earl Warren series or project, was that one of the first series?
- Baum: I don't think so.
- Swent: I was wondering, how did you start thinking in terms of series and projects rather than just individual—
- Baum: Well, it had to do with money. But we started with forestry projects.
- Swent: Who funded the Warren series?
- Baum: Oh, it was the National Endowment for the Humanities, and we had to apply—once we applied and they turned it down. I think I'm right in that. The second time—oh, they said it was too much money, and we had budgeted it at \$100,000. They said, "Oh, that's crazy," so they would—they sort of implied that for \$10,000, they would do it. And so we redid the application for \$10,000, and they funded it, and we had to raise matching money. We had to go back again and again and again, and get money from other places, and set up sub-series of the series, so that we could get little funding from some other place. And eventually, it cost \$100,000 when we were all done. [laughter] And I thought, Gee, that was really careful figuring of the cost. We'd done a terrific job, but we didn't get the money, so we plodded along anyway.
- Swent: And you did get it, eventually.
- Baum: We got it finished, yes. I don't know how long it took, must have taken ten years. Plus all the years to start.
- Swent: What about the STARCH, what they called the STARCH project? State Archives. That chugged along for years too, didn't it?
- Baum: Yes, that came up—I can't remember where it started. Surely after the Earl Warren, because the Earl Warren had really been based on outside funding of the California government. And then we tried to do Knight and Pat Brown as a unit. Governor Knight was deceased by that time, but Pat Brown was very much alive and very helpful—
- Swent: So you didn't ever interview Governor Knight.
- Baum: No, he had died.
- Swent: But Brown you did.
- Baum: Yes. But we interviewed persons in his administration.

Swent: Knight's.

Baum: Knight's. And his wife, oh, she was devoted to him! She put up some funds and helped in the project. Anyhow, it was at some point that we wanted to go on with the governors. We were planning to do each governor, and get a whole—the same as we'd done with Earl Warren, a real covering of what was happening in the state politically at the time of that administration. And somehow, at some point we got the idea that maybe the state would help fund it. We somehow—oh, I wish I could remember this—and Chita would be able to tell you, because it was a—we put in or somebody put in for us a request for money from the state legislature, and it was going to go through the secretary of state's office.

Well, we crashed with the university, because the university had a very firm rule: nobody in the university went for funds for anything except through the university. They had a lobbyist, or a university representative in Sacramento who was not helpful. It was a kind of a crash, but somehow, we got it through. And you know, Lee, I wish I could remember all that, because it was just a cloak-and-dagger game, and every day was an up and a down, and eventually we got a little bit of money. And once they had contributed, they did it year after year. That worked out. We were trotting along.

Other oral history offices, but particularly Claremont College, Enid Douglas was the head of Claremont College oral history project, and the private colleges had always been very concerned that they had to struggle along without government funding, and that state colleges got help from the government. So this was another example of the state government was helping a state-funded project, and not private. So they got their lobbyists going, along with UCLA. UCLA was our opponent also, because they worked very closely with Claremont. Of course, Claremont is right down there, those programs worked closely together.

Swent: So you were all competing for the same—

Baum: Well, they weren't part of it at all, but they were angry that we were getting funding, and so finally, I don't know, we decided—I don't know how we did this—but we would just make it a project to document the state, and divide it up among the major oral history projects, which were ROHO, and we added in UC Davis there—UC Davis had a little oral history program, and they had done a couple of interviews that were part of our Earl Warren project; and UCLA; and Claremont College.

Swent: Was Fullerton not doing anything yet?

Baum: They weren't part of this program. They were doing oral histories. And so we formed a little, what was the-- [pause]

16-00:40:00

Baum: What's the word...?

Swent: Everything's a consortium nowadays.

Baum: Consortium! That's what it was, it was a consortium. Everything, if you were a consortium, you were practically in. It was wonderful.

Swent: It's a buzzword.

Baum: Yes. So the buzzword was consortium, and we were a consortium. [laughs]

Swent: So that made you all right.

Baum: And we started to, we went through the secretary of state's office, and the oral history program, I don't know what they called it, documenting the state government or something, we had to go and we met together in Sacramento, we had meetings, and we argued about who was going to interview who.

Swent: And they had very special editorial requirements, too, didn't they?

Baum: Yes. It went through the California State Archives, which was under the secretary of state's administration, and they wanted all the oral histories to be very consistent, in the same format. And so they developed a format of their own, which had to do with punctuation and placement on the page, and what you could have in the way of an interview history, and all these—they organized it so that they would all be the same. That took a lot of extra time, because it was different than ours, and it was also stupid. [laughter] But anyhow, we did it, and we—I'm sure you worked on some of those, didn't you?

Swent: No, I didn't, but I heard a lot about it in the office.

Baum: To try to get it into that State Archives format was about as difficult and as expensive as to do the oral history and all the rest of the work. To get it into that unified format was a real headache.

Swent: Well, now, they did that different kind of table of contents, didn't they?

Baum: Oh, yes, they had the running table of contents.

Swent: Which I think now ROHO is doing more of.

Baum: I think it was easier to do. They didn't have an index. These were ideas they took from UCLA. UCLA had never had a—had had a running table of contents rather than chapters, and it was organized by interviews: interview 1, and a running table of contents on that. And that was okay. But the thing that was sorrowful was not to have an index, because of course, all these oral

histories from the different offices, they all dovetailed together, with the people that they were discussing, and the subjects, and not to have an index that would guide them together was too bad. I have always thought that—

- Swent: Well, to be usable as a document, you need an index.
- Baum: Yes. So I don't know whether that—still some form of that is going forward, isn't it?
- Swent: STARCH?
- Baum: I don't know.
- Swent: The State Archives project? I'm not sure, I don't know.
- Now, the Reagan project, then, was that—
- Baum: Yes.
- Swent: —part of that as well? And then—
- Baum: And we always, until I retired, every year we had our goal of persons we wanted to interview, and we put it forward in the consortium as we wanted to do so-and-so and so-and-so, and they had their people, the persons they wanted to interview, and we could argue about who could do it and who got the funds for that.
- Swent: I don't know if it's continuing now or not.
- Baum: Yes, I don't have any idea whether it's—but I think it is, in one format or another. Became sort of—I mean, you could expect if you were a hotshot in the state government, that somebody would interview you, that an interview would be a part of the whole series.
- Swent: They must be really valuable resource documents.
- Baum: Yes. So, a lot of those things are behind the scenes.
- Swent: Well, that's the value of oral history.
- Baum: Struggle to—
- Swent: What about the various health projects? Let's see, there was the Kaiser Permanente one. That's been used a lot now, I think.

- Baum: Oh, my. It was to document the formation of the Kaiser health plan, which was, I believe, one of the first or maybe the second big health plan in the United States.
- Swent: It's been the model for HMOs, hasn't it?
- Baum: Yes. And I don't remember how that got started.
- Swent: Did Kaiser fund it?
- Baum: I think so. You know, Lee, that's funny, I can't remember. And it went on; it was a very fine, well-organized project. It was small. I think they started out, they were going to do ten or twelve of the leaders of Kaiser Permanente in the early days. Kaiser—let's see.
- Swent: What are you consulting here? This is the—
- Baum: The index of the Catalogue II of the oral history program, and I might say that it is a very excellent catalogue. Suzanne Riess did Catalogue I and Catalogue II, and they are so good. Okay, Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program, twenty pioneer physicians, administrators, and board members associated with the Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program, and it's underwritten by the Kaiser Foundation Health Plan Hospitals. Well, so it was [inaudible]. Should ask Malca, or who worked on that? Sally Hughes worked on that, and Ora Huth worked on that. And they met—they either—they had a couple of advisors from the project—
- Swent: And there were twenty volumes in that series?
- Baum: Yes, I think—not all of them were—a couple were just finished not too long ago. And when did that start? This is around 1986, '85. Scott Fleming, here's the guy. Interviewed Scott Fleming, Kaiser Permanente lawyer, and he was interviewed 1990 to '91 by Sally Hughes, and Scott was a big advisor for us. You usually have somebody who's on the inside of the program who helps you know who was most significant in what—and so on. Scott was our man.
- Swent: And he was the first one you interviewed? Or one of the first.
- Baum: No, I can't say that. No, wait, no, no, I'm wrong, 1990—no, it started way before that.
- Swent: But he was interviewed.
- Baum: Oh, yes, he was interviewed.
- Swent: Trefethen was one of the early—

Baum: 1985 was the first interviews, I find. Usually—Trefethen, let's see. Trefethen was interviewed—yes, 1985, by Malca Chall. Eugene E. Trefethen.

16-00:50:00

Baum: And he was, it says, industrialist. He wasn't a doctor. And he was also very, very helpful. And that's still continuing. And here's one I'd forgotten about: ophthalmology. The ophthalmology oral history series, and when did that start? 1988, about. It was underwritten by the Foundation of the American Academy of Ophthalmology. And they had an advisory committee that advised us on whom to interview. I think Sally did most all of those.

Swent: Yes, I think so.

Baum: Yes. It's very strange how these things happen. We did a lot of health plans.

Swent: And then Sally went on to do the AIDS study, which was very important, wasn't it?

Baum: Yes. Maybe at the time of this book, this catalogue, we hadn't done the AIDS yet.

Swent: That came later.

Baum: AIDS—no, there it is. Oh, the whole AIDS—oh, now it's coming back to me. Okay, the AIDS project was an interesting one. A man came in to the office, and he wanted to know if he could fund his father's oral history. So I talked to him, and it turned out his father was—we did an oral history with his father. [Edwin H.] Lennette was the name. [looks through catalogue] [spells] And David Lennette was the person who came in. I know we—his father was head of public health in California, and very significant. [pause] “Edwin H. Lennette, Pioneer of Diagnostic Virology, with the California Department of Public Health.”

Anyhow, Sally interviewed Edwin Lennette in, oh, 1982 through 1986. And that turned out very well, and David Lennette and his wife, Evelyne Lennette, they were both virologists I think, decided to fund some other things. They funded another interview with a key worker with Edwin Lennette, with their father, and that was Harald Johnson, virologist. And is that entirely funded—no, funded by Virolab. David and Evelyne had a virology laboratory called Virolab, which funded a number of health interviews. And Harald Johnson—oh, we got funding from Rockefeller Foundation, which much of Harald Johnson's research had been funded by. Well, he was a big man in the eighties.

Oh, when you remind me—I remember all these people. I remember Dr. Lennette, and I remember Dr. Johnson, oh! Such treasures of persons.

- Swent: So it wasn't envisioned as an AIDS project at the beginning, it just—
- Baum: No, no, it turned—it developed—the Lennettes, Evelyne Lennette particularly, had been one of the virologists who had helped their lab, Virolab, in finding out what AIDS was, in finding out that it was a virus or whatever. And so they funded the AIDS project. They funded—how many people did we?—I don't know, we did many persons in the early days of the AIDS epidemic in San Francisco: the medical response. It was the whole early days of AIDS, and how these doctors, especially here in San Francisco, first came across AIDS, and then realized that it was one thing.
- Swent: Yes, it was a whole new thing, wasn't it?
- Baum: Well, it started out as a sort of skin epidemic, terrible sores. They had no idea it was related to the same things—anyway, we've done a number of books on that, and those were fairly short interviews, because those were what we call focused interviews. They weren't the person's whole life, they were just what they had to do in these early days of AIDS. We did—doesn't tell how they were all funded—but Sally did a number of nurses, the nurses who worked with the AIDS project, and they were very close to the AIDS patients. They were sort of separate kind of nurses. It was a very intense kind of nursing, with all your patients dying. And a lot of these nurses eventually burned out and went back to being regular nurses. They just couldn't stand it, to be in this intense—Sally meant to write a history. She wanted to write a history of the early days of AIDS, because the way San Francisco responded to this terrible epidemic, and how they tried to work with treating the patients and developing a citywide way to deal with it.
- 16-00:59:58
Baum: Anyway, Sally never wrote that book, I'm sorry, and of course, now its time has passed. But other people have used the oral histories quite a bit.
- Growing out of the AIDS project, David and Evelyne Lennette were breeders of irises. I had no idea how many varieties of irises there are, and that it's possible to interbreed them and develop new kinds of irises. And they're all over the world, irises; I mean, they're a very widespread type of plant. And so David and Evelyne bred those and belonged to iris societies, and they had some people that they admired greatly in the iris society; would we interview them? So lo and behold, we began an iris project [laughter], and let me see, oh dear. One of the first people we interviewed, they were called Lawyer. They weren't lawyers, they were—but their last name was Lawyer. Lewis Lawyer.
- Swent: So one thing just led to another.
- Baum: That's right. Lewis Lawyer and Adele Lawyer, plant—oh. The title is very good: "Lawyers Incorporated: Partners in Plant Pathology, Horticulture, and Marriage." [laughter] And that project led to, I don't think the—the Lennettes

didn't fund all of them, but it got us into plants, and Suzanne Riess did a lot of interviews on horticulture. Funded in different ways. Oh, David and Evelyne Lennette were probably the springboard for a lot of our work.

Swent: Did you ever do their oral history?

Baum: No. We should have; their oral history is not done yet, but I mean—no, that's—I should talk to Sally about that. They have gone off to, they have sold Virolab and gone off to Costa Rica, where they're setting up a whole plant study program. I forget what they're specializing in, some kind of plants. It may be moss or ferns, I'm not sure. They came back, and we had a little dinner with them. They are certainly an example of two people who can get a lot of things going in different ways, and they become interested in something, and they push it along.

Swent: Wonderful.

Baum: But in these plant things, they gave us money, and we'd start a plant thing, but we wouldn't use their money for all of it. We'd get it together with other funding agencies to help fund a particular person. So the list of—okay, so here's Owen Pierce. This is part of our horticulture series. And it was started by David and Evelyne Lennette, with their funding. Underwritten by the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust; American Rock Garden Society, Western Chapter; California Horticulture Society; Oakland Businessmen's Garden Club; and the San Francisco Businessmen's Garden Club. So all those people contributed money to Owen Pierce, who was the publisher of California Horticulture Society journal, or the editor. He was a writer and handled a lot of the—California Garden Society publications is what the name of the thing was. Owen Pierce, oh! These fine people. [laughs]

And David and Evelyne Lennette, their money was sort of what started it. You have to have enough money to start, and then after that, you can sort of develop some money to finish.

Swent: Other people get on the bandwagon once it gets going.

Baum: Yes.

Swent: I don't think anyone has talked to you about the disability rights project.

Baum: No, I don't think so.

Swent: That was years in the making.

Baum: Years in the planning, and years in the doing, and still is going forward, and has by now started to get federal funds. The disability rights, oh, yes. Let's see, all these things—in the introductions and interview histories of all of the

oral histories, there's—we tell always how the project got started, who was the funder. [pause] This is why you shouldn't allow your interviewee to have reference papers. [laughs] [pause] Doesn't say here. [pause] The disability rights thing, it looks like it started in about 1984, but it went very slowly, and this volume, this particular catalogue, it doesn't list all the things that were done under it, because they were just getting started. How did that start? Berkeley was long ago, or—oh, dear, I don't even remember when the disability rights thing, there was a center for disabled people or handicapped people, and this mostly meant wheelchair people, but severely handicapped people had eventually come, or a few had gotten into Cal, students, and Ed Roberts was one. They lived in Cowell Hospital. They'd set up a wing for them, because they were people who couldn't live alone. I mean, they couldn't live in the dorms or something; they were severely disabled and needed attendants to help them.

16-01:10:05

Swent: And he had to sue, didn't he, to get in?

Baum: I don't remember that.

Swent: I think so.

Baum: I don't remember what Ed Roberts—

Swent: I think it came out of the civil rights—

Baum: Yes, probably did.

Swent: Because I think he was turned down—

Baum: Oh, I'm sure, I'm sure that—

Swent: And then had to sue to get admission. I read his oral history: fabulous, just wonderful. I think it was his that I read, that told what a wonderful thing it was when electric wheelchairs came along.

Baum: Oh, yes. Well, I do remember that Susan O'Hara, and then she was head of some office for disabled students, and it wasn't housing, it was—she was part of the university's administration, to help disabled students, and she was in a wheelchair. She came in to our office, which was not easy; to get to our office with a wheelchair was really hard. And she talked to me about, we should be documenting this development of the idea that disabled people could run their own lives, they could go to school, they could get jobs. They didn't have to be just tended in care homes, and Susan said we should document thing. This is a growing movement, not only in California, it's all over the United States, and as the years went on and we worked together, it became an international

movement. Now it's an international movement, but it wasn't when we started.

Now, how could we get money for it? It was—I know we started with Professor—a professor over in the architecture department who'd written a book on architecture for disabled people, and he had—in the architectural school, they had a little office, which was like one person, that wrote grants. They would write a grant, and I can't remember who even they wrote it to, it was federal agencies that handled disabled problems. And they wrote a grant to interview people, and it got turned down. It must have cost—to write a grant is so expensive, oh, my goodness. It was discouraging that their office—I mean, that they were willing to take on this project and push it with the thousands of dollars it took to write the grant, and that it didn't get funded.

So then it sort of dropped dead, and I don't know how it came back to life, I don't remember that. But it did come back to life, and we eventually did get a grant. And it was through the influence of people in the disabled movement who had influence in Washington that we were able to get a little grant to start. That project, which Ann Lage was the project director, and Susan O'Hara, she was just an advisor, and that's because by that time, she had retired and couldn't work, due to—she couldn't be paid, I know, because of the conditions of her retirement, but she could work for free. And she did do a tremendous amount, and gathered together a team of interviewers, about three or four were seriously disabled, and some less disabled, and found out all the people who were leaders in the movement, and interviewed them.

Swent: Using disabled people as interviewers, as well as interviewees?

Baum: They were interviewers, that's right. They ran the project. And Ann Lage, she kind of supervised to be sure that everything got transcribed and things got taken care of properly. It was a very well done project. After a while, we'd gotten to, our projects were set up in a way that we had advisors, and we had—and we made them work.

Swent: Well, this one's still going on.

Baum: Now, that one's still going on, and it's—but the first few times, I think it failed, because these all go down to Washington to be read by some national thing. I don't think this was NEH, but it's the same method. They have peers, peer advisors, and peers are people who know about the subject, and evaluate the project, and decide if it's good or not good. And peers are usually competitors in the field. [laughter] And so the disability project got shot down by people who said, "Well, these are just California people. There are lots of people who worked on disability in the rest of the country. How come you're not doing so-and-so and so-and-so?" And that was, of course, so-and-so and so-and-so was from their place, and of course, that's true. We would have loved to do so-and-so and so-and-so, but we couldn't travel—we couldn't, for

the same price. If they wanted to double the price, we'd send our interviewers out and do it.

Swent: Sure.

Baum: So anyway, finally it passed by, this is behind-the-scenes lobbying, and I am convinced now that most projects that get funded, they have to have behind-the-scenes lobbying by somebody significant to the federal or whoever the agency is. It can't just go by its own good planning.

Swent: You have to have an advocate.

Baum: Yes.

Swent: Well, that's been a wonderful series.

Baum: Oh! Yes, it's still going forward. I don't know what else to say about it. They had—oh, they had, I think it was a two-day, maybe it was a one-day presentation at one point in Pauley Ballroom. They had—people from all over the country came, not just for the oral history, the oral history was just a part of it, the whole thing. But it was a study of the disabled movement, and by this time, there are departments opening up in different colleges that just study disability things, almost as an ethnic study, and also as a service study, but as a historical movement.

Swent: It's really something very new.

Baum: Yes. And also, a big part of this project was gathering papers. Because this was a project that the papers, whatever had happened about it were spread out all over, and they've come into the Bancroft Library now. I know what was one of its problems in the early days—I see you watching tentatively on the machine—

Swent: Mm-hmm. It's still going.

Baum: Disabled persons were not an attractive collection for the Bancroft Library. They had conquistadors and people like that. And I think that Dr. Hart was not interested in it.

16-01:20:01

Baum: I think Bonnie—

Swent: Hardwick?

Baum: I think Bonnie Hardwick was the archivist then, and I don't think she was interested. So that we didn't have advocates within the university, except for this architecture professor. But we did have among the disabled people, they had built up some lobbying power, and they got it through.

So now the university, the Bancroft Library is very proud of the collection, but for many years, they didn't want it. Of course, one of the things you don't want is a big collection that has no sexy researchers or—

Swent: Yes, they want people coming in to use the things.

Baum: And they want to brag about the collection. Same way the university, Bancroft turned down—didn't turn down, but didn't really try to get various social welfare collections that even came with funding, and took years to get that collected. We were also interested in social welfare. One of our advisors was in social welfare, and he did help us get some oral histories with leading social welfare people, but he was so frustrated, because he wanted this big collection to come into the Bancroft Library, and the Bancroft Library did not want it.

Swent: Of their papers, you mean?

Baum: This was social welfare. But it was the same thing with the handicapped, disabled persons: it was not a popular subject with the Bancroft Library. Now it is, because it's going to be an academic department. They have professors who teach, so it has risen. And I'd like to think that we have a little bit to do with its rising. Although it was disabled people who pushed it and pushed it, and did it, as they did all the things like getting architecture changed, and they're still working on it.

Swent: But the oral history started.

Baum: The oral history is still going, and the oral history was a part of it.

Swent: Yes, I think so. It raised people's consciousness.

Baum: Yes.

Swent: What else?

Baum: Covering subjects in choppy ways, which is—

Swent: No, I think we're doing okay. We've talked about presentations, and have we had presentations of the disabled ones? I was thinking there was that—there was an event where they showed clips from some of the oral histories of the disabled that were powerful.

Baum: Oh, oh yes. That was a—

Swent: That anniversary—

Baum: —Bancroft Library event, wasn't it, in the Morrison Library?

- Swent: Right. And some of the disabled people were there.
- Baum: Yes. Interviewers, yes. Well, that shows that the Bancroft Library finally accepted—not only accepted it, but are now busy bragging about it. [laughs]
- Swent: Yes, takes a while. They came around.
- Baum: But I think the main presentation was this big affair. It was a nationwide affair—
- Swent: That was a conference sort of thing, a seminar.
- Baum: It was a conference, yes.
- Swent: Well, that's a good outcome from that.
- Baum: And they did, they presented the oral—at that affair, the interviewees were there, and got to go up in the front and receive their book, and everybody clapped, so that—
- Swent: That's important.
- Baum: Yes, it's thrilling. I think I was already retired by that point.
- Swent: I think so. What about your retirement party? What do you remember about that? That was very special.
- Baum: Yes, I hate parties, as everyone on my staff knew. I was always trying to *not* have any birthday parties for anybody, and we did have birthday parties, I can say that. [laughing] It was sort of a foggy thing. Oh, it was a wonderful retirement party down in the Morrison Room. And so many people came, and a lot of top echelon from the university. They gave me the Berkeley Citation, and I was so astonished, I almost—
- Swent: You really were surprised.
- Baum: —couldn't speak. I didn't know a word about it! And to this day, I don't know how that was accomplished, because you can't get a—Berkeley Citation is very honorific, and it takes a lot of lobbying to get it. [laughter] And I don't know who was heading all that up. I'm surprised that all that happened without my knowing a thing about it.
- Swent: It was wonderful.
- Baum: Yes. A lot of interviewees were there. My kids were there, a number of my children came. Again I can't—I know Rachel was there, and Anya was there. Because my children, on the whole, knew very little about oral history. They

didn't—they knew Mom went away in the morning and came back in the—
[laughing]

Swent: You kept your business life pretty separate from your family.

Baum: Yes, I don't think I talked about it at the table. Because the kids would not have known who these people were. And the administration of it, although it's terribly exciting when you're doing it and all, it doesn't make too good conversation. [laughter] It's not like making scientific discoveries you can come home and brag about at the dinner table.

Swent: But you did a good deal of—you've attended a lot of social functions—

Baum: Yes, I did. One of the things I attended a lot of were funerals. I thought I ought to set myself up after I retired as a funeral advisor, because I'd seen so many different kind of funerals.

Swent: You were very conscientious about keeping up with the interviewees after the interview had been completed.

Baum: Oh, yes.

Swent: Which meant attending the funeral, often.

Baum: Yes. And I always thought the university should be visible as attending the funeral, and if some faculty member or somebody wasn't attending the funeral, I would go. I wasn't as hotshot as a faculty member, but I could still represent the university. I'm still going to funerals.

Swent: Well, that's part of the oral history game, isn't it? That you're interviewing old people much of the time.

Baum: Yes, it was something that you had to accept, but it was, it is hard when the people you get to know up and die.

Swent: You had some great parties out at Inverness, and you invited everybody.

Baum: You know, I can't remember that, Lee. I know I've had some parties. We have a cabin in Inverness, and in the earlier days when I was a teacher, I sometimes had parties and invited my students.

16-01:30:00

Baum: And you know, I can't remember, we must have gone—

Swent: You invited me a couple of times before I even worked at ROHO, when you were sort of courting me.

Baum: I just can't remember that. Isn't that strange?

- Swent: When I was just being—was kind of interested. I went out there, wonderful party, lots and lots of people of all different kinds. I think you must have invited ROHO staff and interviewees and probably everybody that—
- Baum: Yes, I should have done more of that, because—
- Swent: Well, you did a lot of that. [laughter]
- Baum: Because I've been to some parties, including at your house, which I remember in my life as being outstanding.
- Swent: Well, that's kind of part of the oral history thing, I guess, is you get involved—it's a personal relationship as well as just—
- Baum: It is, yes.
- Swent: That's what makes it different from newspaper reporting or—One of the things.
- Baum: Right.
- Swent: You really get involved with the person's life.
- Baum: I guess in-depth newspaper reporters do, too. But not daily reporters.
- Swent: Well, what about theater, though? You do a lot of theater-going.
- Baum: Oh, but I just go.
- Swent: But this is one of your big interests, isn't it?
- Baum: Oh, one of my interests, yes, and that's why I'm so pleased to be here in Berkeley, where there is theater coming out of your ears.
- Swent: And a lot of them have been based on oral histories.
- Baum: Some of them have, yes.
- Swent: Remember those that were about the bridge, at the time of the bridge-building?
- Baum: Oh, yes.
- Swent: I mean, the anniversary of the bridges, there were some really good oral history—a group called Tale Spinners.
- Baum: Tale Spinners, yes. And that had to do with ROHO. Oh, I was an advisor to Tale Spinners. Not that I advised much; this advisor bit doesn't usually mean

anything. But one of the things I was advisor to was—jumping from subject to subject—

Swent: That's okay.

Baum: —NEH. I was one of those peer group readers, and I could read the grant proposals. Some of them were beautifully written, from all over the United States. But one of the things I noticed that I didn't like, in most of these things, they have a budget, and in the budget, the director—it may not be true—but the director gets a lot of money, and then, the interviewers are paid a pittance. I just thought, why should oral history be one of these top-heavy things where one person's making a lot of money, and I think usually the top person or the director a lot of times isn't doing much. It's the interviewers that are really working, at least the way we do oral history. It's the interviewers who create the thing. And they should be paid, or the director should not be paid so much. But it should not be this, the rich and the poor, within our own little profession here. So I always put that mostly on my gripes, that I thought the interviewers ought to be paid more, or that the director should not be paid so much. [laughter]

Swent: Because that's what determines the quality of the interview, of course.

Baum: Yes. So that was what—

Swent: Was there a particular area that you were reading the grant proposals for?

Baum: No, mine were oral—my expertise was oral history, and then they were, like if it was—whatever it was an oral history of, and I'm sure ours was, our grant proposal, some would go to oral history offices, and others would be specialists in the field. I know where we were shot down by peers was in the suffragist project, and so that would have gone to women's studies people to review. [construction noise in

Baum: In the suffrage project, we submitted a proposal to do the suffragists, and we mentioned the leading ones, who were about six or seven very old ladies. The peers shot it down because they said they knew that those women would not be interviewed. And we knew that they would, because Chita had been already working with them for the Equal Rights Amendment as a lobbyist in Washington. She went back and lobbied, and part of her agreement with these ladies was that, if that passed the Congress, they would do an interview, and before they would not agree to do an interview with anyone, because they were busy; they were putting every effort onto the Equal Rights Amendment.

And so they had told whoever were these peers they wouldn't be interviewed. But they had made an agreement with Chita they would, and when it passed, they would. But the peers said, "No, they won't be interviewed, don't give

them the money.” So what I say is there’s a certain amount of competition and so on in all those peer review—

Swent: But we did a suffragists series.

Baum: We did it, and we were rescued by Rockefeller Foundation. Oh, dear, I wish I could remember the name of this young man who was a grant funder. He came out to ROHO and looked us over for something, I don’t even remember why. But he came to the office and looked at all kinds of things. This was before we even had a grant proposal; we didn’t have a grant proposal then. I think he suggested we put that grant proposal—

Swent: That’s the way to do it.

Baum: And it just passed right away, because he’d looked over everything and knew it was all good. But it was at the last minute, and Chita had already, without pay or anything, gone and interviewed Alice Paul, because Alice Paul was dying, and she knew it was now or never. She couldn’t bear to have Alice Paul die without an oral history.

Swent: And then Malca did Jeannette Rankin, and we just saw a play last week that was based on that oral history.

Baum: That’s right, yes.

Swent: And Jeannette Rankin was very old when she interviewed her.

Baum: Oh, yes. By the time we did Jeannette Rankin, we had the Rockefeller funding. This oral history will only be about funding, won’t it?

Swent: Well, that’s about the various series, which is what we wanted to talk about.

Baum: Which is a large part of the story of oral history.

Swent: Unfortunately, you have to—

Baum: You have to have funding.

Swent: And sometimes the things that are unpopular now become terribly important later.

Baum: Yes.

Swent: And that’s the dilemma of the funding, isn’t it?

Baum: Yes. You think we’ve finished that, or—?

Swent: I think probably so. I'm looking at this little thing [the minidisk recorder], and it's probably about full.

Baum: Because we do have other projects that—I'm trying to think of some of our little series that, I was bumping into—oh, I'd like to talk about the Class of '31.

Swent: Oh, yes.

Baum: For some reason, which I will remember after you go away, someone in the Class of 1931 thought we were doing good work, a man, who was it? He persuaded the Class of '31—every class, when their fiftieth anniversary comes up, they're organized by somebody to make a substantial gift to the university.

16-01:40:00

Swent: Usually it's a plaque on campus somewhere.

Baum: No, no, it's a plaque on something they did. I mean, like they build the steps to the library or something. It's a big amount of money. Anyway, so this fellow, whose name I've got to come up with, because he did a lot, persuaded the class—oh, let's see. There were several suggestions. They were going to give the money to the Bancroft Library for something, and they had a couple of ideas of things. One was Mark Twain, one was ROHO, and something else. So we were in competition with each other in the Bancroft Library. But finally, they voted on the oral history program, and they donated—it was an endowment—gosh, I wonder if this endowment is still standing for the Class of '31.

Swent: Should be.

Baum: It should be, but yes. There was an endowment in perpetuity of money to document persons from the university who had made a substantial contribution in society later. So that was our Class of '31 series. We started out, and there was an endowment, we could get the money, and besides that, each year they contributed more money.

The first thing we did was Robert Gordon Sproul. This was at the insistence—oh, the Class of '31 had an advisory committee, and they worked hard on this. Oh, gosh. [pause] I forget the head of the project—Browne, Alan Browne [spells], formerly from the Bank of America, I think, was in charge of the advisory committee from the Class of 1931. They selected who we were to interview, and Alan Browne turned out to be one of them. But the first person they all insisted we must document is Robert Gordon Sproul. That class was the first class that was there when—that Sproul was their president. I think he'd been maybe made president in '31. And Robert Gordon Sproul had lost his memory, which was a terrible thing, because he had the finest memory in the world before that.

So we interviewed twenty or thirty people about Robert Gordon Sproul. Let's see. And Suzanne [Riess] did those, and they were just short interviews mostly, about persons who had worked with Sproul. [pause, looking through catalogue] Alan Browne was interviewed in 1988 by Malca Chall, and he was a banker. Oh, yes, he had a lot to do with the development of municipal bonds, the different kind of funding. Lois Swabel. So anyway, he was head of this group of Class of '31 people, and vice president was Lois Swabel [spells]. Lois and Alan Browne, they went around, they met all the alumni from '31, who were by that time seventy-five years old, and so were Lois and Alan. And they got them to contribute more money, and they put on parties, and oh, they just worked on this like mad. They were real Cal supporters.

So anyway, we did Robert Gordon Sproul, and where is that interview? And then we did a number of other leaders, and we called, the name of the project was, University of California: Source of Community Leaders, was the name of the series.

Swent: They didn't have to be from that class?

Baum: They didn't have to be, but we certainly gave that class the main—.

Swent: Sure.

Baum: And let's see, until I retired, I think we were still doing Class of '31ers. Robert Gordon Sproul Oral History Project: Two Volumes. And how many people? And the interviews managed to capture many, many of the leaders of the university for that fifty years, and with that subject, they were only to talk about their life with—or talk about Robert Gordon Sproul. We even did his barber. [laughter] Let's see. Oh, we had a splendid presentation at the Claremont Country Club, and it was the annual meeting of the Class of '31, and a great many of them who'd been interviewed were there and could come up and get their book. [laughs] Which were very thin; it was put together for the library in two big fat books, but the individuals got a little thin one of just their own oral history.

That was introduction by Ruth Waldo Newhall. Ruth Newhall was the wife of Scott Newhall, who was the spectacular—that's not the right word—flamboyant, probably, flamboyant editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Ruth Newhall was also, with Lois Swabel and Alan Browne, she was very active in putting that together. I guess we don't have it in the catalogue, this Class of '31, because all those people were from the university, and so we put it into a University of California series. Now I can't tell you whom all we interviewed under that project.

Swent: Well, it was to be one a year, wasn't it? Is that about what they did?

Baum: Yes, it was just whatever was the amount of funds that came from the endowment, which was the interest each year, we got a statement of how much money we'd gotten for that year, and I always had to present a report to this Class of '31 committee, which they sent out to all the members of the class, as to what happened to their endowment, and how much money was from it, and whom we'd interviewed. One of our advisors was Professor Adrian Kragen. I don't remember if he's Class of '31, but he's certainly—these folks, a lot of them lived in Rossmoor.

16-01:50:00

Baum: And they were real Cal supporters, and they kept together—what did we do with Kragen? I think we interviewed him under—he was a professor of law, and I think Boalt Hall put up some money for him. [pause, looking through catalogue] Yes. Adrian Kragen, law professor: underwritten by the Class of '31. Ah, hmm. Yes. Anyway, he just died. Ninety-seven years old.

Swent: Yes, Class of '31, they're all in their nineties now.

Baum: Oh, Yes. Most are gone. Oh, yes, another advisor for that project, and others, was Mary Ellen Leary.

Swent: Oh, yes, I knew Mary Ellen Leary. Sherry, she married Sherry.

Baum: Yes.

Swent: But she always used the name Mary Ellen Leary for her professional work.

Baum: Yes.

Swent: Wonderful woman.

Baum: We do have an interview with Professor Sherry also. Anyway, Mary Ellen Leary deserves to be recognized as an advisor to ROHO, and I think these people who are just advisors, maybe they were this or they were that, but they were crucial to us. We really had help from the community, from different people in the community, the university community.

Swent: Doug Fuerstenau is another one.

Baum: Yes, and we haven't talked about the mining series at all.

Swent: We haven't, and I also wanted to talk about your evaluation reports that you had to do of all the employees. That must have taken a lot of your time.

Baum: Oh. I think that's too much, Lee, for today.

Swent: Is it? Okay.

Baum: Gee, you don't have time to come again, because—

Swent: Oh, I can come again.

Baum: Oh, well, I'd love an excuse for you to come again.

Swent: Should we do another one? That probably is enough for now.

[End audiofile 16, end of session]

Interview with Willa Baum
 Interviewed by Eleanor Swent
 Interview 10: April 13, 2005]
 [Begin audiofile 17]

17-00:00:00

Baum: --and that when it blooms, which is about once in fifty years, I may have the time wrong, but it was a very long time, and then it dies. That's its thing. It takes a long, long time to grow, and then it dies. I don't know if it's bamboo; I've got to go back out to the Ruth Bancroft gardens and see, because it was a magnificent stand he had, and I don't know if it died. But mine is now blooming! And I hope it doesn't all die, or I don't know what happens to it. But I understand--

Swent: And the blooms are funny-looking.

Baum: Oh, they're not beautiful at all. They're little dried-up leaves, and we've picked them apart to try and see where the seed is, and you can hardly find the seed. And I presume that some seeds are going to fall to the ground and replant. But what Philip Bancroft told me was that most of the bamboo in California are one bamboo, one plant. That it came from—I'm sure this is not true now, more bamboos must have come—but somebody brought a bamboo over from Japan, and then they just grow from each other, I mean, from underground—they sprout from each other. But it's the same plant. It's not a new plant. And so that they're all supposed to bloom about the same time, and then all die the same time, because it's the one plant. Well, I see my neighbor's bamboo down the street isn't blooming, so they must have a different plant than we do. [laughs] That's not—none of it's official, and I just think it's fascinating, and I wish somebody would write it up. I think that there was something in *Sunset* one time about these bamboos.

Swent: I've never heard that.

Baum: I have to tell—I mean to look up who writes about plants and things around here in the *Daily Planet*, and tell them. They can come and look at my bamboo.

Swent: Well, when we stopped the other day, we had talked about series, and I thought we had learned about your retirement, but now I think maybe we talked about that off the tape.

Baum: I don't remember, Lee.

Swent: I don't either.

Baum: But I don't know what to talk about my retirement.

Swent: Well, the big party--

- Baum: We had a wonderful party in the--
- Swent: --how very much surprised you were by the Berkeley Citation.
- Baum: --Morrison Room, oh, it was a nice party. And lots of people came, people that we'd interviewed, and people who'd served as our advisors, and—yes, and I was astonished, because they gave me the Berkeley Citation. I don't think I fell down or anything, [laughs] but goodness, I couldn't believe it.
- Swent: That's really the top honor, isn't it?
- Baum: It's the top honor practically that you can get from Berkeley, UC Berkeley. They used to give LLDs to honorable people, not their own staff though. But now they don't give LLDs at all from UC Berkeley, and they give the Berkeley Citation. So anyway, I've got it, and I have nowhere to display it. I'll have to rent an office somewhere and just put it on the walls and meet people [laughing]
- Swent: That little brass head of--
- Baum: Oh, I have a little statue of Hubert Howe Bancroft, and that was an honor they gave me from the Friends of the Bancroft Library at one of their annual meetings. And my little statue of Hubert Howe Bancroft, I usually keep it right in the middle of my dining table, and I'm sure somebody who comes to dinner is going to ask what that is. I can tell my tale. [laughs]
- Swent: Well, it's a nice looking centerpiece.
- Baum: Isn't it nice? And I just—well, I always greeted Hubert Howe Bancroft, the statue which stands in the entrance to the Bancroft Library, he was like a dear friend. And he was like a dear friend because I interviewed his son, Philip Bancroft, and Philip was a dear friend; and later I interviewed Margaret Bancroft, who was the very, very young wife, now of course long widow, of one of Philip Bancroft's brothers. So I'm attached to the family by a long string of not very close relationships.
- Swent: But you made your professional relations into interpersonal ones in a good way.
- Baum: Oh, yes. Margaret was living in La Jolla, and so I chose to do that interview, and I went down to La Jolla. I stayed with her in her apartment. And she was such a dear, oh! I mean, I just treasure that I ever knew Margaret. One of the things she did, she kept a big box of strawberries in her refrigerator, and every morning we'd get out our cereal or whatever, or she would cut one or two strawberries onto lots of the things we ate. It was like using strawberries as a decoration. Well, I've always eaten strawberries as a food. [laughs] I don't know why it's—when I see strawberries, I think of Margaret Bancroft.

- Swent: She was Hubert Howe's daughter, was she?
- Baum: Daughter-in-law. And Hubert Howe Bancroft had two families. In his youth, in his usual years when you're a father, he'd married and he'd had children, I forget how many children he had. But then he married much later and had a second group, and his son—oh, this should none of it be on here because it's all so inaccurate—but his son married much older, the son was older, and he met this lovely, lively little girl who happened to be a movie starlet. And it was just in the teens, 19-teens when movies were starting, and she had become a starlet because, one, she was pretty and cute, but the main thing was that she could ride horses. She could—and all the movies were cowboy movies, where people came thundering in on either a horse or driving a wagon or something, and Margaret could do that. Anyhow, her husband met her, and they finally married, they had a quite long, long marriage, and then she's had a very long widowhood.
- And she had known Hubert Howe in—her husband, when they married, had taken her to the family, which lived out here in Walnut Creek, and Hubert Howe Bancroft decided that his new daughter-in-law didn't know enough California history. So he took her on a wagon ride, I guess, for several days up in the mountains and explained California history in each place, and what the significance was, and so on. So Margaret, she didn't know him very well, he was very old when he became her father-in-law, but [laughs].
- Swent: But when you interviewed her, you were able to capture these recollections, then?
- Baum: Oh, yes. Yes. I mean, it's like being related to the pilgrims coming to America, almost. You just go back in a few generations of those extended families by age differences.
- Swent: When did you interview her?
- Baum: I don't remember that. But it was quite long after I'd been director for a long time and had not done any interviews. And then I thought, "Well, gosh, I've got to keep my hand in." And when I saw Margaret Bancroft coming up as an interviewee, and I had known Philip, it just seemed like my interview.
- 17-00:10:00
Swent: I was thinking if she was a starlet in the teens, she was an old woman when you met her.
- Baum: Oh, she's a very old woman, probably in her seventies, and she swam every morning, she went out and swam way out in the ocean. And she had those little feet, flippers, so that she could swim a long way.
- Swent: That's why she lasted so long.

- Baum: Yes.
- Swent: What other interviews did you do that you remember?
- Baum: Oh, Lee, don't ask. I can't think, I mean, I won't remember, and then if something triggers me that I remember it, then I go on forever about that interviewee.
- Swent: That's good. What we need. Well, let's talk about the mining series, then. We talked about other series.
- Baum: Yes, the mining series was a--
- Swent: One of the most recent ones.
- Baum: Yes, and do you remember when that started?
- Swent: '85 is when I--
- Baum: 1985?
- Swent: Yes. I think you hired me in the fall of '85, after the courtship.
- Baum: Yes, you told me why I knew you. I know you were teaching in the English for foreign-born, but what they called it, English as a second language program, and I don't think I knew you then, but I used to teach in that program--
- Swent: And you wrote wonderful materials.
- Baum: And I did write a lot of materials that they used for lessons.
- Swent: I must tell you that I was talking to one of my friends the other day, Noeline Tam who taught with me, and I told her that I was interviewing you, and she said, "Oh, Willa Baum! She's the one who wrote those little green booklets that we used for our dictation exercises!"
- Baum: Oh, they used the dictations!
- Swent: And she still remembers that they were mimeographed things with green paper covers. They may still be using them for all I know. But you did develop them.
- Baum: I did do the dictations, but I used to write all kinds of lessons where we had a little story, about a paragraph story, and then we had questions you had to answer about the little story and fill in the blanks and all kinds of things--

- Swent: And they were wonderful, because there wasn't material then for adults. There was stuff that was for children, but you wrote for adults.
- Baum: And I wrote those little stories, I mean, the people in the little stories, to me, became real. And I hoped to [help] my students, because each lesson, something happened that I thought might have happened to these students. It had to be relevant to their life.
- Swent: It did. I remember one that was about renting an apartment.
- Baum: Oh, yeah.
- Swent: Something to do with the landlord and Mr. Wong or somebody trying to rent an apartment.
- Baum: I used to write those. I was very busy. When I was teaching English, which was before 1966, when I quit teaching English then, but I would work, teach English in the morning--
- Swent: In Oakland Chinatown.
- Baum: In Chinatown Oakland. And before that, I'd been teaching at the night schools. I started teaching English in 1949.
- Swent: And it was called English for the foreign-born then.
- Baum: English for the foreign-born, yes, that's right. But anyway, when I was teaching when I was working for the Oral History Office, and then I came home at noon, or I drove from Chinatown home, or to the university, and dashed in at one, and worked in the afternoons, and then I came home, and took care of the family. And then I'd go to bed maybe at ten-ish, and then I'd get up at two or three in the morning and write those little lessons, and correct my papers, and then go back to bed.
- Swent: Oh, Willa!
- Baum: [laughs] It was very busy.
- Swent: And you were having babies at that time too, right?
- Baum: Yes, I had children. Well, that certainly took us through the whole of my career, from English [classes] for foreign-born to my retirement. [laughs] No, but I did have fun writing those lesson plans for the English, and I really—I started teaching also in the summer at UC Berkeley in their English program, and that was very interesting. They had students, foreign students that had been admitted to Cal, that had passed whatever the test is that all foreign students have to pass, a rather difficult test to go to a university using English.

But the fact was that they couldn't hear English. They were wonderful in writing and reading, but they couldn't hear. And they couldn't speak.

Swent: They hadn't practiced it, of course.

Baum: Yes. And so we had special English classes, oh, that was fun too. Because those were a different kind of students. In our Oakland classes, the people were lower-class wage earners, probably. And in the university, they were probably top intellectuals of whatever country they'd come from, and they were very smart, but they couldn't hear and they couldn't speak. [laughs] Anyway, but it was fun to see the different people, to see how they grasped the language. So I intended, I was really intending to go into linguistics maybe, after I'd written those lesson plans and all, and become a real professional in how to teach English. Which of course I didn't know how to do professionally, but I had been doing it, and I thought I'd study at Cal and I'd become a leader in how to learn different languages.

Swent: It was really a new field at that time.

Baum: Yes, I think it was. Yes, there weren't any—and there was no training for—yeah. So it was only by a miracle, I don't know what miracle, that I shifted into oral history. At that time, I was wobbling around. I didn't know what my career would be. I had been aiming at being a professor of American history, but let me see, when did that fail? Well, I've told about this in another interview, that that all failed because my husband became ill, and I had to get a job now, not after I finished a PhD and started at \$4,000 a year, is what I think they were starting faculty—women. Hardly—women couldn't get a job as faculty, but if you did get a job, it was in Mississippi and it was \$4,000 a year. I can't move my family there and [laughing].

Swent: No, no.

Baum: Now, where were we? Where did we start here? We were starting with—what little trail were we following?

Swent: We were starting with how I met you, and there was the--

Baum: Oh, okay, I see. That's how I met you—or not, it isn't, because you--

Swent: I was teaching after you, and heard about you, and used your materials--

Baum: Right, and some of the teachers I knew from the old English program were friends of yours too, and I was still friends of theirs.

Swent: But then I think the first time we actually met was in connection with that Oakland neighborhood history project.

- Baum: Was it? Because—yes, I remember you were interviewing refugees from Vietnam.
- Swent: Well, then I began doing this independent thing, because I was teaching these refugees—
- 17-00:20:01
Baum: Yes.
- Swent: And I didn't even know it was called oral history, but we were using tape recorders in the classroom. And then I decided to invite some of these people outside of the class time to record their stories, because they were so interesting, and would be lost otherwise. And I think it was Ann Baxley who told me that you were doing something like that at the university, and I should come and talk to you. And I came and talked to you about it, and you told me to go to Merritt and take the oral history course from Mark Greenside.
- Baum: Is that right? Okay.
- Swent: I'd—the word oral history was just kind of new to me at that point. And I think it was relatively new—this was early eighties—no—well, yes, around 1980. Or maybe late seventies. I started interviewing these people after the fall of Vietnam in '75, so it was maybe '77 or something like that. And you said there was an oral history class at Merritt.
- Baum: Okay, I forget that. I do remember Mark Greenside very well.
- Swent: And you said that you had wanted to do a series on mining. When we talked, and you found out that I had a mining connection, then you got kind of excited and said--
- Baum: That's right.
- Swent: --to get some training, and think about coming to work to do—and it took, I don't know, four or five years before we really were serious about it.
- Baum: Yes. I do remember how long we thought about mining, and that was because our secretary of our office, Sue Gangware [?], she'd come to us from one of the mining departments. And she knew lots of people in the mining, and she talked to us about interesting things that were going on in the mining department, and I realized, with Sue Gangware's assistance, that mining was a major, major profession in California, and that we were not documenting anything about it. So I had been thinking about it for a while, so when you came in, it was like a little trip from heaven, that somebody had sent me one means—when you start a project, one of the first things is you've got to have somebody to do the project who knows about the field, and could do the interviewing, and could also know people to raise money. Because I believe

by that time, we were practically totally supported by outside donations. So that's, so you were a gift from heaven.

Swent: Well, you were for me also, but now, you're assuming that it's better to have somebody interview who knows the field, and some people don't—and who knows the people. And that's an assumption that some people question.

Baum: Well, yes.

Swent: You know, there's that whole discussion about whether an insider--

Baum: But that's whether they're insiders or outsiders, and the insiders might be colleagues. Having professors interview professors is a disaster. And peers of people, peers interviewing each other, I think is a disaster. Probably just as you and I interviewing each other here is a disaster, because--

Swent: Well, we hope not!

Baum: Well, no, but it's a conversation rather than an interview. But you have to have an interviewer who knows the subject well enough, from studying or working in it or something, to be able to interview the people, and you have to have somebody who can develop the series. You have to know who are the important persons in mining, and what are the real issues we need to develop. In our office, the interviewer in that field was pretty much the person who guided the project as to what was important to do. Now, we would try to pull in faculty to serve as their advisors, but that interviewer was the person who met with the faculty, or the advisors who might be outside of the faculty, and worked to develop the series. It was not like some things, where the interviewer is just, gets an assignment and he does a quick review of the subject and goes out. The interviewer in our office really developed the project and knew who to invite to be the interviewee, talked to people in the field who were the interviewees usually. It was a really professional task.

And the concept that some programs do, they get in graduate students in the field that they're interviewing, and they send in an interviewer, who is a graduate student, probably in that field, knows the field, or at least the vocabulary. But they're not going to stay, and they're not going to get to know all the people in your area, and our area was California. In the case of the mining, it was the world, I guess, but it was sort of western-oriented. So it's a different concept, I think. Our interviewers were permanent, I hoped. I mean, I didn't want to get people who would come in for two or three years and then go away and leave me standing there holding a mining series with no interviewer.

So anyway, it was essential, when you came in, that here was a person who was educated and could work part-time on small wages—the small wages were always a major thing in our subject, in our field. And who knew people

who she could get in as advisors and to set up the project. So you were a real boon.

- Swent: It was the right thing at the right time. It just sort of came together.
- Baum: And that's the way most of our—like our subjects on books and fine printing, it came because I got an interviewer, Ruth Teiser and Catherine Harroun, they worked together always. And they also did the wine series. We would not have done wine if I didn't have Ruth and Catherine, who knew the wine people.
- Swent: Doug Fuerstenau was key to the mining series also.
- Baum: Now, I think you must have--
- Swent: And Phil Bradley.
- Baum: You must have—oh, you knew the Bradleys, Kay and Phil Bradley. And did they advise, did you know Doug Fuerstenau then?
- Swent: I think it really came about because of Doug Fuerstenau. We drove the Fuerstenaus up to the dedication of the McLaughlin Mine, and when we were in the car that day, Doug Fuerstenau said, "You know, this is a historic event, and something should be done about it." I think he had the idea, and whether it was oral history, I'm not sure--
- Baum: Yeah, he just wanted--
- Swent: I think he did. He may have gone to talk to you, I don't know--
- Baum: No, I think I met Doug Fuerstenau through you, but--
- Swent: But he had—and the other people that were in the car with us that day were the Kielys, John Kiely, who was the vice president of Bechtel. And he and Doug both said, "This is an extremely important historical event, the opening of this mine." And they put it in a historical context, and--
- Baum: And you and Lang [Swent] drove--
- Swent: We were driving them, because Lang knew—had been up there and knew where it was, and these other people hadn't, and so we drove them up. And there was a lot of talk that day about how important it was for history, and that was I think—that was in '85, maybe the spring of '85, I've forgotten. But then somehow, it was from there that this thing got put together, and Doug Fuerstenau, who was professor at the university and became the chief faculty advisor—

- Baum: Yes. Well, I remember you put on a party.
- 17-00:30:01
Swent: And that was sort of at your suggestion, you said, “Why don’t you get these people together for dinner?” So I had the Fuerstenaus and the Bradleys and you came for dinner. You convinced Doug that he should be the faculty--
- Baum: Faculty advisor, and we should--
- Swent: Principal investigator, we called it.
- Baum: That’s right. Well, principal investigator, that comes from grant proposals that had to have a principal investigator. But the mining, we never had a grant proposal. We got--
- Swent: He and Phil got together a group of people, and a list of interviewees, and started fund raising, and it just—
- Baum: Yes, it was individual donations, I think, or company—a lot of company donations.
- Swent: Bechtel, through Kiely, gave money. And Homestake.
- Baum: It was just such a magnificent project.
- Swent: Well, what was magnificent about it?
- Baum: Well, I think the participation of the mining community, which was pulled together by you and Doug--
- Swent: And Bradley.
- Baum: And Bradley, Phil Bradley, yes, Phil Bradley. Yes. Phil Bradley was the first—no, he wasn’t the—was he the first interviewee, the first real one? You did Horace Albright?
- Swent: The first real one was Horace Albright, because I was going down to--
- Baum: Oh, but that was just a little one.
- Swent: That was a practice one for me, yes. And then Phil Bradley, yes.
- Baum: Yeah. I do remember our presentation there at Phil Bradley’s, what was some kind of a mining engineer’s monthly meeting--
- Swent: Society of Mining Engineers, they call it now. AIME, it was called then. American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers.

- Baum: In San Francisco, it was a fine dinner. It wasn't just a presentation, it was their monthly meeting, I think, or the--
- Swent: It was their old-timers night.
- Baum: Old-timers night, oh, gosh--
- Swent: But before that, then, this is something that you were key in too, that you said we had to have institutional authorization, and we got the AIME, the local AIME section to sponsor this.
- Baum: Okay, that's right.
- Swent: Then we could write letters to people and say we had the sponsorship of the AIME.
- Baum: Oh, that's right, and you had to go around and—Oh, it's beginning to come back to me, it's all—it was--
- Swent: We wrote a lot of letters on ROHO letterhead, of course, and explained the project. It was the right time, because people came on board and got enthusiastic. It was not hard to—I think it was something people realized needed to be done.
- Baum: Mm-hmm.
- Swent: And with people like Phil Bradley and Doug Fuerstenau, whose names meant something. Then it snowballed to where people were really wanting to be interviewed. [laughter]
- Baum: That's right. Well, do you remember how many interviews we did—you did?
- Swent: We started at first and said there would be five. And we ended up with sixty-some volumes.
- Swent: There were about a hundred interviews.
- Baum: And you did all the McLaughlin Mine, there were many shorter interviews in there.
- Swent: We did over forty interviews for that.
- Baum: Yes.
- Swent: That was twelve volumes in the end. And then—yes, it was a big series.

- Baum: It was a good series in that everything—you were able, when you did one subject like that over a time, that things began to weave together. All related people and things that developed from this developed to that, and--
- Swent: Well, the wine series must have been similar, wasn't it?
- Baum: Yeah. The wine series in a way was more personal, I think. The mining series was personal in the persons, but also it had a lot to do with information about the mines they developed, and how those things developed, and technological changes. I remember labor relations changes, so it was a real study of the industry. And maybe the wine series was, but I think the wine series was a lot the story of the personalities that did it.
- Swent: Well, I think in the case of the mining series, the impact of the environmental movement was so, so strong, and that maybe was one of the things that we documented that was really new.
- Baum: Yes.
- Swent: Technological changes too, bigger equipment and all that, but that was sort of obvious. But the whole environmental movement that came in in the seventies was something really new. All these people had been affected by it. And maybe the wine hadn't had anything like that that--
- Baum: Well, but the wine was not—oh, certainly the wine was great, but wine is all over. And of course, mining is all over, but your series covered eventually mining all over all parts of the world. Plus the—I mean, one of the things that really enabled the project to spread was that you paid for your own travel, and I think you did that because you had frequent flier miles--
- Swent: Yes, and I was able to.
- Baum: Yeah, and you were able to go places—where, you went to Latin America, you went to—where ordinarily we would not have been able financially to send anybody anywhere.
- Swent: No, if we'd had to take money from the project for my travels, it would never have--
- Baum: No. I don't think so. Well, the project would have gone, but it would not have been so broad.
- Swent: Well, I was lucky I had a daughter in Salt Lake, and a daughter in Los Angeles--
- Baum: Salt Lake was the place to have a daughter for this project.

- Swent: Right, I just made a lot of contacts there. And the trip to Chile was—I've forgotten why anyway--
- Baum: Chile, you had a personal reason to go.
- Swent: Yes. I guess I used flier miles for that. But I'm thinking now the other—well, the other series were political, and water of course, and they were more local, just California.
- Baum: Yeah. No, I think the mining series was unusual in that—well, Lang, your husband Lang, knew people and was a member of the top echelon, so you had entree that other interviewers would not have had probably, personal connections. You certainly knew the field, from being raised there and being a mining administrator's wife in the Mexican wilds. So anyway, it was unusual things coming together. I suppose all good projects happen to be an unusual coming together of various things.
- Swent: The time was just right for it.
- Baum: Yes. And I can think of a number of our other series that some of those things would apply to.
- Swent: Well, the opera series was another big series that we didn't talk about.
- Baum: See, the opera...
- Swent: And the blues. You've done a lot of good music ones.
- Baum: Yes, and that's—I think the music ones were due to the fact that we had Caroline Crawford as an interviewer--
- Swent: Again with all the right contacts.
- Baum: And Caroline had a lot of the contacts, and she was still and still is working for a news outlet as critic for musical performances.
- 17-00:40:00
Swent: I mean, she was able to get Phyllis Wattis on board. Or someone did.
- Baum: Yes, Caroline got Phyllis Wattis to donate, but I can't remember why Caroline knew Phyllis Wattis. But I think through an interview. I cannot remember quite all that happened, because often, the way you become—your first entrée to this crowd is being an interviewer, and you start with a little interview, and you become a friend, and they introduce you to someone else. And Phyllis Wattis supported what we called the—it was really California composers, and she just put up a lump sum, which I believe was \$100,000. Caroline was free to—again, we had faculty advisors—but to choose what composers to interview.

The opera, that had to do with—now I can't even remember his name—Adler, Karl--

Swent: Kurt?

Baum: Kurt Herbert Adler's. And somehow, the project was built around him, and he was such a world-famous opera—what do we call him?—he directed the opera—impresario.

Swent: Impresario.

Baum: Yeah, they called him Maestro. Well, we shouldn't talk about that, Lee, because you and I don't know enough about—you don't know enough about it and I don't remember enough, unless my interviewer remembers, and Caroline--

You're right, that every single one of our series just come together by a marvelous collection of happenstances, maybe.

Swent: Getting the right people at the right time.

Baum: Yes. And again, I just say that that way of how our office worked like that, it wouldn't—we didn't have so many university regulations. I don't know if I could have been able to hire you or hire Caroline even, because now you'd have to advertise the position and sit around a year while all the applicants were being interviewed, and assuming you had your interviewer picked out, that would be called a wired job, which means that all the other people were just shells. They didn't know that, and they were wasting their money and their time, and our money and time, because they were not going to be hired. I mean, that's such an unworthy way of putting things, unrealistic way.

Swent: But that reminds me of another thing I wanted to ask you, though, about you had to write a lot of reports evaluating the employees.

Baum: Yes.

Swent: As director of the office, this was one of your jobs.

Baum: Right. As it began, we used to have a little form, three or four pages, and each year, we evaluated employees, all employees. I only did the interviewers, and whoever was the office manager sort of did the transcribers and so on. It was sort of a pro forma thing, and they listed what they had accomplished. Well, usually the interviewer wrote it themselves almost, and then I tweaked it.
[laughs]

Swent: You were good at tweaking. Must have taken a lot of your time.

- Baum: It took time, but when it was sort of pro forma, we had worked out a way to do it. It wasn't too much. It always seemed to me like such a waste of time, because not only did our office, me, but also whoever else worked on that, work on it, but then personnel office had a couple of people who'd have to—if we had eventually twenty-four or once thirty-two employees, imagine all the personnel work involved in all that. I do see that where it worked out was where in a few rare cases we had to get rid of somebody, and that would—I mean, you had to have documentation that they had not performed adequately.
- Swent: How did you feel about this?
- Baum: Well, if it was somebody we had to get rid of, I was glad to get rid of them, because I wouldn't get rid of anybody that I even had doubts about almost. And it was not the kind of thing we usually came up with. Later, they began to go more and more into this evaluation. It came to be a great—it took up four months of the office's time, practically. I don't know, in a way, I had a feeling it encouraged competition, and I didn't like competition. I didn't want competition. People—different interviewers did their interviewing in different ways: they had different values to the office. I don't know, it just kept developing unpleasantries. And that's why now with Schwarzenegger saying that we must have merit teaching, and evaluate teachers on merit and such, and I think, Oh, that will just break up the collegiality of our school system. But not that we had in the office any prizes to offer. [laughs] I don't know. From time to time, the university was always struggling with business types who wanted to run it like a business, and have people get bonuses if they did better, financially bonuses or—which are not, again, collegial.
- Swent: Well, how do you evaluate an oral history or an interviewer? How can you compare the value of one against another?
- Baum: Well, let's see. Some of the—you can read the—some interviews are better than others. And as we all know, the basic thing about the interview is who you're interviewing. So that how good the interview is is in large part based on whom you selected to interview. But no, there's a lot of difference in how well—. And some interviewers were definitely not as good as interviewing, and some of them were very good at something else that helped the office. And people had little assignments within the office that they did that were crucial to the whole operation.
- Swent: I'm thinking some of the interviews were used a lot more by researchers--
- Baum: But that wasn't based on the interviewer or interview; it was based on the subject--
- Swent: And it might take years before--

Baum: And the researcher that happened to come by, or the subjects that were researched. Like, as I was commenting the other day, one of my little interviews that got all around the world was this one with the banker whose chauffeur found the Drake Plate.

17-00:49:58

Baum: Well, it was of no significance, but it only had—it was a short little interview—but it had the word Sir Francis Drake on it, and lots of libraries wanted it. I don't know if any researchers used it, because probably very few researchers were interested in the Drake Plate. [laughs] So that's a subject, I mean, you can't-- You've asked a question that of course I don't know the answer to.

Swent: There's no single answer, I guess.

Baum: No. It's how you evaluate interviewers, and sometimes you don't have to evaluate the interviewers.

Swent: But you were required to.

Baum: Yes, but mostly, let's see. And we sort of had a—where could we go? I can't remember our grades. If you became an interviewer, and what were we called? Editors. We were all editors. That was the only classification in the university classification system that fitted anywhere near what we did, and we didn't fit the requirements that the university put out for editors, because we didn't do that. But that was the only thing we fit. Well, persons were hired as Editor I, and then eventually they could move to Editor II, and that was—there was a reward for that, because it raised your salary category. And then within your category, you advanced by time, how many years you'd worked. Automatic increases, and when you reached the end, sort of near the end of Editor I's raises, you'd be evaluated for Editor II, and—well, I think I was an Editor III.

Swent: There was something called Senior Editor, too. I mean, Senior Editor, also. Wasn't there?

Baum: Oh, no, that was a different era, I think. Because we didn't have a junior editor. I don't know, because I think it was—and over the years, that changed. But I know that in order to be an Editor II, you had to be a participant more in the office than just your own field. And let's see, Suzanne was just, she had so many things she did, Suzanne Riess. She put together our catalogues, she evaluated—I mean, she rewrote or tweaked—every interviewer, when they turned in their catalogue entry on what the interview covered, why, Suzanne tweaked it up to suitable catalogue entry form. Malca Chall, she always did—she kept track of a lot of the business things. Oh, how many hours—oh, one of the things you really could evaluate was how efficiently an editor worked, an interviewer, in getting the interview going, getting it finished. How many

hours. We had everything broken down to how many hours did you do of research, how many hours of editing. How many hours of supervising the completion. And some people could diddle forever, and others could go right through. All of these things, every single thing we did depended primarily on who you were interviewing. [laughter]

Swent: That's right.

Baum: So nothing was completely in an interviewer's hands, which I guess is nothing in the world is completely in the worker's hands. You've raised a lot of questions, and I--

Swent: You think a moment, and I'm going to put in another one of these things.

[End audiofile 17, begin audiofile 18]

18-00:00:00

Swent: This is the second tape, and this is April 13, 2005, Eleanor Swent and Willa Baum.

Baum: I realize I'm probably talking much louder than you, Lee, and it's because I'm used to talking loud because so many of my people I talk to are deaf. [laughter]

Swent: Do you want to talk at all about what you've been doing since you retired?

Baum: No.

Swent: No? [laughter]

Baum: I've been doctoring.

Swent: You worked for a number of directors of the Bancroft. You started with--

Baum: Oh, Dr. Hammond.

Swent: Have you talked about that in other interviews?

Baum: Probably on and off, slightly. What can I remember? Dr. Hammond, we didn't—well, when we first started, we weren't even part of the Bancroft Library, and I did come in and talk to Dr. Hammond. What about? Well, sometimes he knew about the people we were interviewing. He was—when I first came to Cal, it was not—I was going to Mills, and let's see. I went to a church, I think—who did I meet? Anyway, I met Dr. Hammond's son at church, in a youth group--

Swent: What church was that?

Baum: The Unitarian church on campus. Anyway, so Chuck knew I was studying American history, so he wanted me to meet his father. So he took me up to the Bancroft Library, which was then on the top floor of the library, in what later became our coffee rooms. And that was the Bancroft Library, and I came in, and he introduced me to his father, who was—I guess he was director of the Bancroft Library then, yes. I was really impressed. [laughs] And Dr. Hammond was a sweet guy, a very folksy kind of fellow. But I didn't have to—he was never in charge of anything that we did, because we were under the library, not under Bancroft.

It was at some point when we—we used to try and get copies of our interviews, and this was back in the days of carbon paper, so there were not many copies, and the main copy went into another division of the library. We didn't have a copy for the Bancroft Library. I don't know what's happened, but subsequently, we were able to Xerox those, so that we could have other copies of our first oral histories. But the first ones, there was just one in the library and one in the person's hands, and there was one copy in our office.

Swent: If people wanted, did people get copies of their own?

Baum: Yes, they got a copy.

Swent: But then if they wanted to order more?

Baum: They couldn't order more. There was no way to make it.

Swent: My, Xerox has been wonderful, hasn't it?

Baum: I know! I don't know how the world existed before Xerox.

Swent: And it's happened so quickly. When I first started, Kay Sugimoto was typing things with carbon paper.

Baum: Was she?

Swent: And that was twenty years ago. She was still typing the final thing with carbon.

Baum: Really? That short?

Swent: Mm-hmm. And when we edited, we would just sweat to make any changes that had to be made without changing the pagination. That was crucial.

Baum: Oh, yes.

Swent: If there was a line to be added or deleted on page four, you didn't—you couldn't change the whole manuscript.

- Baum: No! People who work with computers have no idea how life was before—you had to retype the whole page if you changed something, and you're right, if you changed the pagination, you'd have to change pages and--
- Swent: The whole manuscript.
- Baum: Oh, dear. Yes.
- Swent: And then I hadn't thought about the fact that they couldn't make copies of the-
- Baum: Yeah. We've been offering copies for more than twenty years, I think. Well, let's not argue about the time, but I know that the change was tremendous. Because before computers, there was Xerox. We Xeroxed—that's how. We made copies by Xerox. Yeah..
- Swent: And the first computer was that huge Zendex.
- Baum: Zendex. We got that from Livermore.
- Swent: Bob Livermore.
- Baum: Bob Livermore. [laughs]
- Swent: How did that come about?
- Baum: Oh, well, let's see. Bob Livermore, one of the famed Livermore brothers, he was doing something with the Bancroft Library, I don't know what, and he particularly was interested in the Mark Twain Project. I don't know what Bob Livermore was doing, but he was manufacturing or doing something with computers, early computers. And so he gave us one, which I'm sure was a generous income tax deduction. And it was to be shared with the Mark Twain Project. And the computer was in their room, because we had no room in our office for anything. And that was a complex thing, sharing this computer, and when you could use it. And there was a lot of repair work going on. Bob Livermore was in our office very often. He was such a big man; when he came in the office, it almost—the whole office was crowded. [laughs] Oh, all those Livermore boys are big boys and they were big personalities too, yes. Bob Livermore, oh, I enjoyed him. He took me and maybe someone else, I can't remember, to lunch a couple of times. It was fun, he was fun.
- Swent: He's gone now.
- Baum: Yes.
- Swent: So the old Zendex, it was a noisy thing.

Baum: Oh! It was noisy, it was broken--

Swent: It was big.

Baum: Yes, it had lots of troubles. And I can't even remember what marvelous things it did. I know the central office staff were often thrilled at what it could do. Yes, and I'm sure that a large amount of our time over the years has been taken up in moving from equipment to equipment, because every time you changed your computer or it changed its software, or the library decided to change its software and insisted we change, it made a big—we had to revise all kinds of things, retrain. It took so much time, and I used to wonder, are we saving any money with this, if you count the time that people spent fooling around with their computers.

18-00:10:08

Baum: And I think that's still going on, I don't know. If they'd just get a system and stick to it...

Swent: I'm not sure it saves much paper either.

Baum: Oh, it can't! It doesn't save any paper, because reams and reams of paper get—and then people get careless and they'll feed off, reprint a whole manuscript for I don't know what reason, and then they throw it away, and now I have it as scratch paper. [laughter] I love the scratch paper, because you can use all the back, but gee, oh, it's terrible.

Let's see, what--

Swent: Well, we were talking about directors, Dr. Hammond.

Baum: Okay, Dr. Hammond. And then we had a couple--

Swent: Did Dr. Hart come after him?

Baum: No—oh, wait a minute. Jim Holliday was director for one year, I think. I always liked Jim. But we didn't have much to do with the director. They didn't mess in our business and we didn't mess in theirs. [laughter] And Bob Becker, who was assistant director or associate director or something like that for many years, I worked with him a lot. I can't remember why, but Bob was a very good man to work with. And then, let's see. But I can't remember what the issues were, Lee. I can't remember what we—I can't even remember having any great issues.

And then Dr. Hart was there for a long time, and I had more to do with him. One, because he either instituted or I got invited to, that he had a weekly Bancroft head of departments meeting, and we sat in the meeting room and everybody—partly it was a show and tell, because everyone could sort of

report on—usually most of the people were working on acquisitions, like they'd gotten a set of new papers or something, and they'd report on it or show something that they got. And they also allocated—decided what to buy, and the Bancroft has a number of little endowments that can be spent on one or another specific subject. So then the heads of the departments would—there would be offers of how to spend it, because people who were selling papers, manuscripts, books, would bring it, and the curator of that department would evaluate it and then put it up as something they could buy with what endowment fund. So that was always a big part of that meeting. It was very interesting to me.

But I had no money; no endowment came to ROHO, and so it was just interesting, but not bothersome. I guess—yes, and our head of departments—we never had anything that really—later on, when Charles Faulhaber came, we did have some things that we did have to argue about, with the whole head of departments. And I guess there was some money that could come to ROHO for a certain subject. Or it could go to somebody else for some other related thing, and so there was a bit of competition.

Swent: How did Dr. Hart feel about oral history?

Baum: He wasn't enthusiastic and he wasn't unenthusiastic; it was okay. I feel Dr. Hart adored manuscripts and fine printing, and things like that. He really loved this written paper. Now, the oral history did not come under love for Dr. Hart; he saw it was valuable, he was glad to add his support to a letter requesting funds or anything like that, but you could see his heart did not thump heavily on something as it did on manuscripts. No, I don't think anybody ever liked oral history very much.

Swent: How about Charles Faulhaber?

Baum: I don't think he likes oral history much either. And that was one of the reasons we made such an effort to publicize, in one way or another—with publicize, I mean with the library, with the Bancroft Library some way, or with the Main Library, what we'd created and what it was being used for. That scholars were coming to use this material, that was what we were trying to emphasize.

Swent: Internal public relations.

Baum: Yeah, internal—we didn't have much. We had no external except our own little efforts to get funding for a certain field, of which, getting back to the mining, I think that was wonderful that there were various mining publications and things that could indicate what had been done and who had been interviewed.

Swent: And the presentations.

Baum: And the presentations were in important mining groups of professional associations. So that the mining community was aware of the series. I don't know if the Bancroft Library was [laughs] aware of the series or even cared. But it was internal public relations that we had to work on. Now, Charles Faulhaber...

Swent: What about the university development office? Did they ever—did you have any relations with them?

Baum: Yes, they—at the beginning, the only thing I knew about the development office was the alumni association, and Dick Erickson was the head of that. Agnes Robb, President Sproul's longtime personal secretary, was on the alumni board, and they did have funding. They got money, funds of money from the alumni, and that alumni association board allocated it, and they did—we did always apply to them, and they did allocate money to always a specific interview. But they did, and I was always in touch with Dick Erickson. We had very nice relations. And Agnes Robb, bless her soul, she always lobbied for some funding for the Oral History Office. But that was all we had about development.

Then when the development office—let's see. I think they were always hostile to oral history, or more or less hostile, or nervous, because they were afraid that we would get some funds for oral history in our private fundraising that would take away from the development office. And they always had rules that you couldn't apply to—you couldn't talk to anyone until you got okay from the development office, which is of course ridiculous, in that the people we talked to were of no interest to the development office often, or—I don't know, they were just a pain. And some of the people in the development office were helpful, very good. But they didn't help do—nobody did a grant proposal. We were always competitive in grant proposals that only one proposal could go into a foundation from the university, and which proposal would it be?

18-00:20:11

Baum: Well, it would surely not be the Oral History Office's proposal. So I would say all of that was just another little step to get around.

Swent: What about relations with Mark Twain? Not Mark Twain himself, but with the Mark Twain Papers.

Baum: No, Mark Twain Papers. We were always friendly. The only thing we were competitive about was for rooms. We were all up in a line there with no space. They were running out, they had no space; we had no space. We were looking at their rooms and they were looking at our rooms. Otherwise, they were very pleasant neighbors, nice people. And I think Mark Twain, I think—god, for a minute, now I've forgotten his name--

- Swent: Bob Hirst?
- Baum: Bob Hirst. Bob Hirst. I think he felt that the Bancroft Library and different things were not—they were in the same position as we were. We were sort of a little outside appendage of the Bancroft Library, and one, he, like I, did not have any part in the management of the main Bancroft Library. I think Bob, yes, he didn't want to even come to those department head meetings. He didn't know why he should spend his time on them. [laughs] I was more interested in what was going on in Bancroft. They were good neighbors. And I always thought they had a better—that with Mark Twain as your lead applicant, Mark Twain is so well beloved, he had better opportunities than the Regional Oral History Office. And he's done very well. He's got support from faculty members and he's done a very good job.
- Swent: Much national scope, too.
- Baum: Yes, and some of those things are just—there have been little things happen, like finding new parts of Mark Twain's manuscript that puts them right into the national news. They've done very well. I don't know where our rooms will end up at the new Bancroft arrangements, but now the oral history is much better known. I mean, a lot of people know. I mean, we've really done a fantastic job of internal relations, and the oral histories—well, let's see. I just got a message, Adrian Kragen, who was our advisor in the Earl Warren series, and later became one of our chief advisors in the Class of 1931 series, he just died, age ninety-seven, and his oral history was a major part of the memorial service. They read from it. And it's been a part of the memorial services ever since we've had oral histories of faculty members. And other people—I mean, in community things, it's true that oral histories, one of their major uses is for memorial services.
- Swent: So that's helped to bring about appreciation of the--
- Baum: Yes, it has. Yes. And it helps, as I've mentioned in other interviews, it brings about for those of us who've worked on it a satisfaction with our work that it has been so meaningful to the families and colleagues of the people we've interviewed. So that not only do the people enjoy being interviewed, but their story goes on.
- Swent: How do you feel about the move to do away with—there's some talk of not having indexes and not even bothering with printed volumes any more, that we should go to computers--
- Baum: Well, I'm happy to know that that movement came after I retired. It would have made me purple with rage. It does make me purple with rage! [laughter] I think there must be printed oral histories that people can hold in their hand and read. I think there need to be indexes, so that scholars are not going to read the whole oral history, and people tell me that they can, by computer,

they can zim through to key words, and they'll be zimming forever and they won't find the key concept which they could have read perfectly easily if we'd just indexed the topic and they could go right to it and get their material and use it. I think one of the things ROHO has done better than any other organization, other oral history, is our guides and helps for researchers, particularly the indexes, the table of contents, the interview histories that tell how the interview came about, and how it was done, and different pieces of information that are useful to the researcher, and are—this is our honorable introductions, which are introductions to the person by a colleague usually, or someone who knows them well, add material to the value of the oral history. I don't know, I just think they're—I'm very, very proud of our entire oral history things, and they could be cheaper--

Swent: Yeah, that's the argument, that those things are all expensive.

Baum: They're expensive, and let's see, you can say—if it's worth doing, it should be worth doing well. I don't—the cost of oral history is so high that that may not be true, that a half-useful thing for researchers is better than none. So I don't know the answer on that. But I do think that in terms of a first-class project, I'm glad I was affiliated with a first-class project and--

Swent: Product.

Baum: Yes, product. Yes, product. Wouldn't have had the same sense of satisfaction with the interviewer, even, if we turned out a shabby product, poorly edited or poorly—or not printed, my goodness. Well, anyway, luckily I have retired. I'm not ready for this new age. [laughter] This virtual age, I guess, where things flit across the air and get caught in a little machine and that's all. I'm with Dr. Hart: printed word.

Swent: Paper.

Baum: Paper. Paper.

Swent: And pictures, too.

Baum: And pictures, yes. Yes. And, papers collected as background. I mean, we'd get pictures and papers, additional things that went in the Bancroft Library that enhanced the oral history.

18-00:30:05

Baum: Anybody who wanted to know more could go search out the other materials.

Swent: Mm-hmm. Well, it comes down to space and time and money, doesn't it?

Baum: Does come down to space, too.

- Swent: Those things take up a lot of room.
- Baum: Yes. Well. [pause]
- Swent: So is there anything else that you think we should say? Those are—we covered all my questions, I think.
- Baum: We didn't cover something that you were concerned about. When we did your husband, Langan's, interview, and he was part of the mining series, we all agreed that it was not possible for his wife to interview someone, that that was definitely a no-no. And so Malca Chall did the oral history with Lang. You helped with putting together ideas about what to interview, and pieces--
- Swent: Not really much.
- Baum: Didn't you? Well,--
- Swent: I was pretty much in the background.
- Baum: Malca's an eager beaver about research.
- Swent: She did a good job.
- Baum: And it was—Lang's oral history is long and detailed, and it seems like it's the oral history that ought to be read before anyone worked on any of the other oral histories in that he kind of sets the scene. I think it's an outstanding introduction—it wasn't done first—but to mining, in this era that the oral histories are.
- Swent: Awfully long.
- Baum: I know, and you objected, Lee, because you thought it was gobbling up too much money, I think.
- Swent: Oh, no, that—partly—I just wondered whether it really was just way too long. But it's good.
- Baum: Yes. Anyway, I'm glad we have that long oral history of Lang's. And it includes a little oral history of you.
- Swent: Yes, she interviewed me too. That was an interesting experience.
- Baum: Yes, you see what an experience it is to be interviewed by somebody else.
- Swent: It's good.

- Baum: Yes. I wish those books were all sitting in my house and I could read them now. They're not available to me any more.
- Swent: I think we all wish we had time to sit down and read all those oral histories, they're so wonderful.
- Baum: Yes. My son liked to come up to the office once in a while and read the Russian émigré oral histories, because they were so--
- Swent: Now, we haven't mentioned those. Malozemoff was one, who else?
- Baum: Yes, Plato Malozemoff.
- Swent: His mother.
- Baum: Oh, his mother.
- Swent: I did Plato.
- Baum: You did Plato, but we had done his mother as part of the Russian émigré series. This is way too jumping around to use in an oral history—but that's—and I think maybe I've mentioned the oral histories, that they were done by a professor of Russian history who came down from Canada every summer. He was researching—his research was Siberia and Russians in Alaska, and so he was going to be interviewing—he knew all the old Russians. These would be the White Russians, many of whom had settled in California. He interviewed a lot of them over a long series of years. I don't know how they're used, because I have no connection to the Russian history world.
- Swent: But that was a donated series, then?
- Baum: No, it was partly funded by a department at Cal. And it was practically donated, because Dick Pierce, he did all his traveling on his own, but he did give us the tapes and then we transcribed them, and he'd edit them, we'd put them out. So I guess the processing was paid for by a UC division. It was Slavic history something. Dick Pierce initiated it, but he got a professor to get the money. And it started, it was under when we were part of the library, and the faculty—oh, I can see these people walking in front of them, and their names don't pop up.
- Swent: I remember reading Plato's mother's, and it was one of the carbon typed and had the original photographs in it.
- Baum: Yes, that's right.
- Swent: Beautiful thing, but--. I guess one of a kind, there weren't copies.

- Baum: Except it can be Xeroxed now.
- Swent: It can be now.
- Baum: It can be, and we did make those available to other libraries through Xerox. We had to Xerox our own copy, it was expensive to open it up and Xerox it, each page by page. Dick Pierce just died a couple of months ago, and he still had one oral history to finish, a very valuable oral history. I don't know what will happen to that.
- Swent: What do you do with an unfinished one?
- Baum: I don't know. [laughs] And Dick Pierce had been working on it, and I think he's even had it retyped at his own cost. I mean, he's edited it and had it typed, but I'm not sure. I must call his daughter and see if she knows what's happened to it. And the man who was interviewed is long dead. These things moved very slowly, because Dick had his own work, and he did a lot of writing and publishing and researching. We were only a little adjunct of his work.
- Swent: That's somewhat typical too, isn't it?
- Baum: Yes.
- Swent: When you're interviewing people who are significant for other things.
- Baum: Well, he was the interviewer, but yes, and the people he interviewed—no, they usually were mostly retired White Russians. That's right, I forgot. Malozemoff, oh, that was a big story in the mining series, wasn't it? Because we worked with Plato Malozemoff, oh, just think what a good time you had, Lee, or a hard time, or a--
- Swent: Yes!
- Baum: --challenging time, shall I say!
- Swent: Some of them are challenging! [laughter] But they were so thrilled to be—I think all of them, I know every one of those people felt to be interviewed for the Bancroft Library Oral History Office was a real accomplishment. They were all very proud of it. It had real cachet. And, of course, some people were upset that we couldn't get around to interviewing them. I was sorry we never could get funding to do more women.
- Baum: That's right, yes. You won an award, the Clementine—I can't remember what the--
- Swent: [laughs] The California Mining Association.

- Baum: California Mining Association, what was the award?
- 18-00:39:59
Swent: The Clementine award.
- Baum: The Clementine award! At some big meeting. [laughs] For documenting the industry.
- Swent: Right. And I was thrilled at that. Oh.
- Baum: Well, we've probably done enough, don't you think?
- Swent: I suppose so. I don't think we've done enough about your national work outside of ROHO.
- Baum: And you know, it wasn't very much, Lee.
- Swent: Well, but you're so well known.
- Baum: Yes, but—I don't know why.
- Swent: Well, you did a book with David Dunaway. That was--
- Baum: Yeah. We did a couple of books, and the main reason was the little manual that everybody used at starting. But of truth, I always did not participate in any of those things very much, because I knew that I could not do it on university time. And I didn't have other time.
- Swent: So you did three books in all, didn't you?
- Baum: Yes, probably. One, the original manual, *Oral History for the Local Historical Society* it was called--
- Swent: That's the bible.
- Baum: That's the bible. And then I did another called *Transcribing and Editing Oral History*, and that's a bible too, but not so significant a bible, or not so much used a bible. And then the other, the book on, the anthology, it's only an anthology of writings about oral history. I did that because David Dunaway made me. [laughs] But he was my student, I was teaching oral history, a graduate program in the history department, and David was one of the students there. He got his PhD, and oral history was one of his fields. And to do that course, teach that course, I had to go through all, everything that was written about oral history, and then select the most important things to assign to the students, and also we had to, because they came from remote journals often, put them in the library, get copies in the library so students could come and read them.

Then David got a job at the University of New Mexico teaching oral history for one of his subjects, he was English writing, or writing—and he used some of those same things, and he was having the same problem as I did, that you couldn't get all these—a teacher couldn't get those pieces, or find them. So he said, "Let's put together an anthology," and I said, "No, I don't have time." [laughs] He really did make me, he was a very good taskmaster.

Swent: It's a wonderful book.

Baum: Yeah, it was a good book, yes. It just sort of saved all those articles that would have been lost in the many little publications that they're in. Nobody would have found them. Of course, now there's a number of books on oral history, and how to do oral history a lot. I doubt if anyone uses those any more.

Swent: Well, I think your first—those two bibles I think are still valid. Somebody--

Baum: I think they're valid, but they have been written by other persons. And of course, everything about how to do it, which was based on typewriters and carbon paper and—is redone in terms of--

Swent: That's changed.

Baum: And equipment, and I didn't write much about equipment, because I knew it would change.

Swent: I don't know whether you've talked very much about the national—you went to the famous Arrowhead meeting. Did you talk about that with someone?

Baum: Yes, I went in—except for the last year or so, I went, every—the Oral History Association meetings, colloquia we called them, I went to every one but one. In one, I was just about to have a baby, and I just didn't think I could make it. [laughter]

Swent: Do any of those activities particularly mean a lot to do?

Baum: Do they mean a lot to me? Yeah, they do. And the friends I made there and saw year after year, they mean a lot to me. Some are dying now.

Swent: You always roomed with Barbara Ornstein.

Baum: Oh, Barbara Ornstein from Connecticut.

Swent: You roomed with her a lot of the time.

Baum: I always roomed—after I met her, yes, I always roomed with Barbara. What to say about those oral history colloquia? One of the wonderful things about them was that they were always in a different city, all around the country, and

it was a chance to go and spend at least three days, and that's why I stayed with Barbara, we always stayed two days after the meeting to see the museums and whatever that there was to see in that locale. The thing that really I was always concerned about and I am still concerned about was that we never had a way to tell what oral history was going on, and where the oral histories, how you could—who was being interviewed. What were people doing and who were they interviewing? Because some people had been interviewed by three or four different projects, and they were—I suppose you'd think the interviewee would tell you, "Well, I've already been interviewed by such-and-such," but they didn't. I don't think they did. They were pleased to be interviewed again. I don't know what they did.

But it was a waste of—well, of course, each interview is different, but we didn't have that, and we finally got out a directory of oral history projects around the country, as many as we could find that would send in their information. And we tried to get a list of all the people who had been interviewed, sort of--

Swent: A registry.

Baum: A registry, yes, something that you could trace. Never really worked.

Swent: That's right, I guess there still isn't one.

Baum: No. And probably now, I don't know how Google works, do you suppose we could say "oral history" and it would come up with a list of anybody that's ever been interviewed?

Swent: I don't know. I honestly don't know.

Baum: All these questions have so changed with computers that I don't think it's been solved, however. Nancy McKay from Mills College, now, has a proposal in—I think I told somebody else this—to do a book on how to catalogue oral histories. She's a librarian, the librarian at Mills, and that's always been a problem, is how to, when you get an oral history into your library, and many, probably every library in the country now, large or small, has some local oral histories. And how do they catalogue it, and how do they make it available for their community, or the wider community? So Nancy's working on that book. And it was the book I was planning to do, I was going to have the trio: how to do the oral histories, how to transcribe and edit, and how to catalogue them. That was going to be my third book, and I was going to do it with Bonnie Hardwick. Bonnie and I were planning that, lightly, because we were both terribly busy. Bonnie was the head of the manuscript division of the Bancroft Library. Well, we never did that, and it would have been possible if Bonnie and I could have worked on it, because she knew how to do cataloguing. But of course, I know nothing about the interior workings of library systems, and archival cataloguing, and so on.

18-00:49:59

Baum: I always thought, when I retire, I'm going to tour around the country and go to libraries that have oral histories, and look at how they've put them in the shelves, and how they've catalogued them, and how people use them, and all that. And then I was going to write a book about it. Well, I didn't do that. And all of it's changed now. It would have been a book that went into the garbage can [laughs] shortly thereafter.

Swent: Maybe it's just as well you didn't take the time to do it.

Baum: Yes, right.

Swent: Did you ever count up how many oral histories you supervised?

Baum: No.

Swent: Must have been thousands.

Baum: No, only the ones we've done, and I don't know. We did count how many oral histories--

Swent: Well, you did a lot of others as well, though. I mean, you advised on others outside the office too.

Baum: Oh, yes, slightly.

Swent: Lots of hundreds, anyway. [laughter] Well, I think maybe we've wrapped up. Do you think so?

Baum: Okay, yeah, I think so.

Swent: Anything more you want to--?

Baum: No.

Swent: Okay, well, this has been great. I'll turn off my little gadget.

Baum: Turn off. Goodbye, oral history, goodbye--

Swent: Now, don't do what you know every interviewee does, which is talk about all the best stuff after the tape recorder is turned off.

Baum: Oh!

Swent: Which, remember, we used to always laugh about that.

Baum: Yes, we'd try, if we didn't turn off the tape recorder until you'd gotten out the door.

Swent: Usually the best stuff comes in the conversation after you turn off the tape recorder.

Baum: Yes, yes. Just like I think the best conversations at parties always occur at the door as people are leaving.

Swent: That's right. And people are always talking about how you should hide a tape recorder under the table, but that doesn't work, does it?

Baum: Yeah.

Swent: Okay, well, I'll turn it off.

[end audiofile 18, end of session]

Interview with Willa Baum
 Interviewed by Gabrielle Morris
 Interview 11: May 18, 2005
 [Begin audiofile 19 (tape 19, side A)]

Morris: Preparing to interview Willa Baum about her experiences as director of the Regional Oral History Office. The date is Wednesday, May 18, 2005. The interviewer is me, Gabrielle Morris.

Rather than start with this chronology, which I did twenty years ago, when we first started your oral history, I thought maybe we should start with how you became acquainted with others doing oral history. When you came to the Bancroft Library in '54, did you already know about oral history? Was it just an interesting job for an English major.

Baum: No. I was a history major. Let's see, I think I have discussed this in another interview—when I came in, the budget line, the resource line, had been established, and it was from the president's office. We were starting an interview with Regent John Francis Neylan. Oral history was known slightly. I think there'd been an article or so in historical journals. And Allan Nevins, who had retired from Columbia [University], was now living in Southern California, working at the Huntington Library. He was a senior research fellow or something.

Morris: Oh, what a nice retirement spot.

Baum: Yes. And his research brought him occasionally up to the Bancroft Library. You could see him in the reading room there. He had talked to people, so we knew about Columbia. Now, the other thing we knew—and "we" is Corinne Gilb. She and I were hired about three hours a week [laughs] to work on this. The Bancroft Library was already the repository for oral histories done by the Forest History Society, which was in St. Paul, maybe? It was back east, around the Great Lakes. Their role was to interview old foresters, and then they would put the oral histories in the library most adjacent to the area.

Morris: Where the forester had—

Baum: Been, yes. So the Bancroft Library was the recipient of western forest history interviews, and we had a few. They were just typewritten papers. With old fellows who knew the old system. Not managerial people in the forestry business but old foresters, wood choppers.

Morris: Oh, wonderful, yes. Who was the guiding spirit of the Forest History Society process?

Baum: That was Elwood Maunder, M-a-u-n-d-e-r. Woody. We all called him Woody. [laughs] We did eventually, fairly soon but not when Corinne was still there,

get to know Woody. He was often hanging out in our office. I wish I knew what happened to Woody. He eventually moved the Forest History Society to UC [University of California] Santa Cruz.

Morris: How come not to Berkeley?

Baum: I don't know, but first he moved to Yale [University]. I may be wrong. He moved to an eastern school. It was a separate organization, the Forest History Society. They had their own donors. It was built from people who worked in the woods or in the lumber business. And wherever he was affiliated, which I think was Yale, was loosely affiliated. They were his repository.

But they got into a competition because Yale, as similarly we ran into at UC Berkeley, eventually, spent their time raising money from donors, and sometimes the donors were the same people. And so Yale put a big restriction on them, that they were not allowed to write or call anything. [laughs]

Morris: It sounds familiar.

Baum: Yes, it was the same competition for donors. They were so intrusive on the Forest History Society that Woody finally decided he just couldn't stand it there any more, and he moved out to UC Santa Cruz, where, again, they had a loose, very loose connection.

Morris: Was Santa Cruz doing any oral history at that point?

Baum: I don't think so, but they did eventually start. I don't know where this happened in the story, but certainly Forest History Society had nothing to do with Santa Cruz's oral history group, which was part of their library.

Morris: Was Allan Nevins around the library enough to be enthusiastic about the beginning of the Bancroft project?

Baum: No. He wasn't around much, and he was very elderly, so he was probably not full of enthusiasm, period. But he did give some advice, to which I was not privy. He talked to the library people. Anyway, somebody had gotten advice from Allan Nevins. We had the blessings of the founder.

Morris: Yes. Was UCLA already doing oral history in the fifties?

Baum: Let's see, we started interviewing in 1953. We were sort of officially founded in 1954. I think UCLA started about 1958.

Morris: Was Berkeley encouraging them?

Baum: Now, who was their director? Someone I knew well. He was an historian, and he had a part-time job with the library at UCLA. I forget what library,

equivalent to Bancroft, the historical collecting one. And his job was to rustle around and get papers, go out and talk to people who were significant in California history. And so he came up and talked to us. His goal, when they set their oral history [program] up, was to collect papers. It was considered the way they could latch onto the papers—go and talk to somebody about their life, which they weren't much interested in, and then get their papers.

Morris: Well, that idea has kept current.

Baum: Yes.

Morris: And it was UCLA that finally decided to call a meeting together? When was that? The chronology was that Columbia issued the first catalogue in 1965.

Baum: Yes.

Morris: And Allan Nevins urged Louis [pronounced Louie] Starr to form an association.

Baum: Yes.

Morris: But then the first meeting was actually held out here in California [in 1966].

Baum: That's right. The person who initiated it was [James V.] Jim Mink. Jim Mink was at that point director of oral history at UCLA. The oral history office was a little adjunct of their library.

Special Collections, I guess that's what they called it. Jim was the head of the oral history and other things. Jim Mink was a librarian, and a very innovative fellow. And so it was he who thought, with the two people who worked with him in the office; I should remember these people. I can see them as plain as I can talk to them, but I can't come up with their names, and they're not in there. Donald [Schippers?] no, that's somebody else.

It was Jim Mink and his two assistants at UCLA who decided to just issue an invitation to come and talk about oral history to all the people who were in this catalog.

Morris: Who had been interviewed?

Baum: No, Columbia's catalogue was only the names of oral history associations, their addresses, who was the head of the thing. Goodness, I can't remember what it was. It was just a list of all the oral history associations—

Morris: People who were practicing.

- Baum: When he saw that, then Jim thought, “Gee, there’s enough people here to have a gathering.”
- Morris: Well, then, how did Louis Starr know who all these people were?
- Baum: I don’t know why everybody knew Columbia, but Columbia was the fountain of information about oral history, and Allan Nevins was already known as the father of oral history. If you were going to start an association or do anything about oral history, you wrote to Columbia.
- Morris: Now, how did Louis Starr become—
- Baum: Louis Starr was the head of the oral history program there. His assistant was Betty Mason. They were both very active, very knowledgeable, well-known persons. Anyway, so anybody who was in oral history or wanted to know about it would write to Columbia. And so Louis had all the names and addresses.
- He had the list, and that’s what he thought of, just putting out a little book or a little booklet. When we looked at it and said, “Wow! Look at how many of us there are”—[laughs]—you know, that’s when Jim Mink had his great idea. And so he called a gathering, which was going to meet at Big Bear—UCLA had a conference, resort center up at Big Bear [Lake Arrowhead]. I forget how many people we thought would come.
- Morris: Was it like Asilomar [Conference Center in Pacific Grove], with places to sleep and eat?
- Baum: Yes. And cheap in those days. So that was the gathering, and it was a really wonderful gathering, as I think anything is that’s beginning and people are all enthusiastic and trying to help each other.
- Morris: By then, you were head of the [Regional Cultural History] program at Berkeley.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: And were you part of the discussions with Jim Mink about—
- Baum: No.
- Morris: No?
- Baum: I don’t think so. I think Jim just called the meeting.
- Morris: Okay, and you just got the announcement in the mail—

- Baum: Right.
- Morris: —and said, “I’m going.”
- Baum: “Oh, that looks great.”
- Morris: Yes.
- Baum: I don’t recall planning anything about it, but we were up there. Chita [Amelia Fry Davis] and I went.
- Morris: Chita had come aboard in 1959, according to this first catalogue of the Oral History Office [1980].
- Baum: Okay, then that’s right. That’s correct.
- Morris: Did she just walk in the door, or had you gone out looking for somebody?
- Baum: No, she walked in the door. I think I told you all how Chita walked in the door, but she and her husband had come to—where did they come from? Somewhere in the middle west. [laughs]
- Morris: Yes.
- Baum: And her husband [Hilary Fry] had a job working with the chancellor, I think, and they had three little boys. So they moved out here, and as soon as they got established, Chita went looking for a job at the university. She went to confer with Walton Bean, Professor Walton Bean. Why she did that, I don’t know, but Walton Bean happened to be our faculty adviser. Walton Bean suggested that Chita come over to our office and see if there was a place for her there. And she came, and there was.
- Morris: You were looking for somebody at that point?
- Baum: I don’t know that. [laughs] I don’t know if we were looking for somebody or when somebody came, we thought, “Ah.”
- Morris: You realized this was [cross-talk].
- Baum: That we need that person.
- Morris: Yes.
- Baum: Before that, on your list, don’t you have Suzanne [B. Riess]?
- Morris: I have Suzanne in 1960 [as noted in Catalogue I].
- Baum: No, that’s wrong. I think Suzanne was there before Chita.

- Morris: Let me ask her, because she put the catalogue together. [Suzanne Riess was hired January 27, 1959.]
- There was also Richard Pierce.
- Baum: Pierce, yes, who just died this year.
- Morris: Oh, dear. After you, the catalogue shows Richard Pierce coming on the staff in '58, Chita in '59, Suzanne Riess in '60, and Irene Prescott in '62, and Edna Daniel in '64.
- Baum: Hmm.
- Morris: All before the first OHA [Oral History Association] meeting.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: And then in '65, the great addition of Ruth Teiser and Catherine Harroun.
- Baum: Yes, because they went to that first meeting at Arrowhead, yes.
- Morris: Oh. That must have been something.
- Baum: It was, yes.
- Morris: Were they vocal participants?
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: Ruth had already been doing—didn't she bring her interviews into the Bancroft?
- Baum: No, she hadn't been doing interviews. Catherine and Ruth were gathering information on wine in California for a book of their own. But they were freelance writers, let's say, and they wrote about different industries and things for little trade journals. Especially Catherine was a very fine photographer.
- Morris: I remember.
- Baum: So they did articles. One of the articles I remember was for some bakery association, California Bakers or something. Catherine would complain about how hard it was to photograph bakers.
- Morris: [laughs]
- Baum: She said most of the bakers were black people. And they wore these wonderful white things—

- Morris: Toques, yes.
- Baum: White toques on their head. Well, the camera can't be set for white and black at the same time. If you could photograph the white, the black people disappeared into just a blob. Anyway, Catherine just was tearing her hair, how she could photograph black people wearing white uniforms.
- Morris: That's wonderful. So did Suzanne go to the Arrowhead meeting?
- Baum: No.
- Morris: And according to these notes, there were about eighty people at Arrowhead at that first meeting?
- Baum: I don't know, but that sounds about right.
- Morris: Yes. I can't tell you where I got this information from. Probably from assorted oral history reviews and things like that.
- Baum: Charlie [Charles T.] Morrissey, who was one of the speakers, is a person I remember there.
- Morris: There was also Philip Brooks. He was on the steering committee.
- Baum: Phil Brooks. He was head of the Truman [Presidential] Library.
- Morris: Now, it says he was from the NARS.
- Baum: That's National Archives something.
- Morris: and Records Service. And Gould P. Colman from Cornell [University].
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: Philip P. Mason.
- Baum: Yes, he was from Detroit.
- Morris: Woody Maunder, and Peter Olch.
- Baum: Peter Olch was from the National Library of Medicine in Washington.
- Morris: The National Institutes of Health?
- Baum: Maybe, but he was the head of the library. He didn't do any research.
- Morris: And another guy was Victor Witten from the Dermatology Foundation?

Baum: [laughs]

Morris: I mean, that's a very unlikely—

Baum: Oh, Victor Witten. Oh, he was a character, a real character. Came from Florida somewhere. He was very precise fellow. He was concerned about documenting the pioneers in dermatology. He was concerned in documenting them with wonderful sound. His whole thing—he was really a sound technician.

And so he was on all the committees that we talked about sound, because trying to get good sound was an important aspect of oral history. What kind of tape recorders do you use, and how to record the sound. He *was* interested in the history of dermatology, but he was mostly concerned with the sound. I think he had a wonderful studio in Florida. People told me.

Morris: This was still the great big—

Baum: Oh, yes.

Morris: —German Tandberg machine?

Baum: No, before that we had—what was it [Ampex?].

Morris: But you needed to be strong to carry them around.

Baum: You had to be strong. We had to wheel them down the street on our little dolly. What was it? I probably have one in my house. They were good machines, I tell you, the quality of the recording was wonderful.

The quality was good, and you could see the little wheels going round and round and knew you were recording.

Morris: And lots of little dials to go back and forth.

Baum: No, it didn't have so many little dials. No, it wasn't high tech. It wasn't like they used on radio, where they really had high-tech to screen out high notes or low notes or whatever. Oh, Victor Witten. He stuck with us a couple of years. Elected to some positions. But the only thing he cared about was this recording. Whatever meeting he went to or whatever, it was about—it soon devolved to how you recorded it and was it a good recording, and finally he dropped out with great anger, out of the OHA because he said we had such low standards that he couldn't deal with the association. [laughs] Of course, the standards were just the sound.

I think Victor Witten did do good oral histories, although I haven't seen them. I don't know what's happened to his collection.

- Morris: To the Dermatology Foundation.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: What were the issues other than deciding to form an oral history association? Do you recall who the speakers were?
- Baum: Allan Nevins was one, of course. Anybody recalls that. And I don't remember we especially had speakers. We had gatherings to discuss something.
- Morris: Did everybody meet as a group, or did you break out into panels and discussion groups and affinity groups or things of that sort at that early stage?
- Baum: You know, I can't remember, maybe, except that I do remember one meeting, which I'm sure everyone there remembers. It was what they called—everybody was there. I think Allan Nevins was speaking. We were all sitting around in chairs. It was kind of informal. There was a man there who was from a historical society in New York, I think. East Coast. And he stood up and asked Allan—
- [End audio file 19, tape 19, side A; begin side B]
- Baum: And he fell over, just shoulder on the ground, and everybody was shocked and gathered around, and Peter Olch, who was a doctor, leaped up and tried to do something, but he was dead.
- Morris: Oh, my lord.
- Baum: That was pretty traumatic. And it's recorded, because they were recording the whole meeting; the whole meeting was recorded and transcribed. That was our first *Oral History Review* or something [Oral History at Arrowhead: Proceedings of the First National Colloquium on Oral History (Los Angeles: Oral History Association, 1967)] It was the transcripts of the whole meeting.
- Morris: Oh, my. Yes.
- Baum: So that sort of put a [damper on things]—I mean, from then on we were quite sober.
- Morris: I would think, yes.
- Baum: Well, this man [Walter McCausland], as I understood later, who was quite elderly, and he had had a heart problem, and he had even been advised that maybe he shouldn't be traveling up a mountain. Big Bear was not very high, but maybe he should not go up that high.
- Morris: Particularly after flying across the country.

Baum: Yes, yes.

Morris: That's quite a start, yes.

Baum: We had something in memory [of him] later. Okay, I remember that.

And one of the big events was, we had made a movie. Our office had made a movie, Chita had interviewed a forestry lobbyist on video. Yes, our video office had made this little movie. It was a very nice maybe half hour, and we had worked it out very carefully because Chita had interviewed this fellow. I think it was [William Scofield]. She had selected the most interesting questions, and he was very good at answering, and animated. It was a marvelous movie, and it was maybe half an hour. And so we had this little movie to show, and Ruth and Catherine knew how to show it. They were technocrats, too.

Somebody had donated wine, and so we had a wine and cheese party in their room, I think, and everybody came, and we showed the movie. [laughs] I mean, it was just a neat little party.

Morris: That must have been a very early visual presentation of an oral history.

Baum: Yes.

Morris: That would be very exciting.

Baum: Yes. Plus it was—

Morris: Was the film edited at all after Chita had recorded it?

Baum: I don't think so. I don't think so. It's just a recorded movie. But it was so candid. The guy was a lobbyist, and he was very candid about how they lobbied. It was a real eye opener in many ways. I wonder what ever happened to that movie.

I took that movie before or after that time to a meeting of the Western History Association and showed it.

Morris: Was there just the one copy of it?

Baum: I don't remember. I don't remember. I think you always should make more copies, as soon as—

Morris: Yes. Do you remember what kind of technical issues there were? Did the questions that became the goals and guidelines come up, about one's responsibility to the interviewee and responsibility to the archives and things like that?

- Baum: I don't think that was the main sort of things we talked about. What our roles would be for doing interviews. They weren't technical. I mean, they weren't about tape recorders. [laughs]
- Morris: Right.
- Baum: They were about legal agreements or what kind of agreements we'd make with the interviewees. In this first meeting, a number of people who came were psychiatrists, I think.
- Morris: I remember that, and there were several from government agencies in the early years.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: What was the psychiatrists' take on—
- Baum: Well, of course, their main take was that all these fool historians didn't know how to ask questions.
- Morris: [laughs]
- Baum: [laughs] If you were going to interview somebody, you had to study for six years, how to do it.
- Morris: What did the historians say?
- Baum: We thought we were doing pretty well. First, we were not interested in their psyches, we were interested in—
- Morris: Facts, facts.
- Baum: Facts, facts. What did you do at the government, or this and that? The psychiatrists—within a year, they'd all dropped out. They thought we were not doing anything they were interested in.
- Morris: The people from the military history projects continued? I remember them at the Asilomar colloquium in 1970.
- Baum: The military always had somebody there, and that's because they did do—what do they call it, debriefing?
- Morris: Yes. And they also have an archival responsibility to prepare narrative histories of every unit in the military periodically.
- Baum: Yes, so there have always been some members of the military. Some are Air Force. I think Air Force probably had representatives.

- Morris: And then there would be Army [Corps of] Engineers, who had their own collecting program.
- Baum: The military—they always were concerned, because the people who did the oral history were usually, like, lieutenants, but the people they interviewed were generals or—I mean—yes, they interviewed a lot of the top officers. And how, in a very hierarchical organization could you have an underling asking questions of an “overling”?
- Morris: What was decided about that?
- Baum: Oh, nothing ever gets decided. I’m sure they were aware of the problem.
- Morris: Right. It sort of seems similar to the question that comes up every now and then in interviews that I’ve done. “You’re a civilian that works for the university. What do you know about the state supreme court system?” Or “What do you know about the captains of industry?” That doesn’t seem to bother most narrators.
- Baum: Yes, but that’s because you’re not a part of the hierarchy. You’re outside of their hierarchical arrangements, but when you’re being interviewed by your organization, I suppose if you had a captain of the Ford company, that if you had a Ford member—well, you usually don’t have people of the same company interviewing you.
- Morris: I’ve heard that that was a problem in doing some organizational histories. The big boss wanted to read everybody else’s transcript.
- Baum: Oh, yes, that’s always been a problem.
- Morris: It looks like some money was pledged by a few oral history offices to start an organization, but it looks like the first business meeting wasn’t held until the second colloquium in 1967, which was at Arden House in New York, at which Louis Starr was elected president, so the first year there was just a steering committee, after the meeting ended?
- Baum: Probably.
- Morris: Do you remember anything spectacular about the Arden House meeting?
- Baum: First we went to West Point. All these things are very vague in my mind. It was a very fine meeting, the second one, at Arden House, if that was Arden House. Yes. It was a big country mansion.
- Morris: It was a Rockefeller estate, wasn’t it?

Baum: Something like that. It had been donated to Columbia as a resort or conference center. Lots of people came.

Morris: Was Louis Starr the logical choice?

Baum: Oh, definitely, absolutely, in every way, because, of course, although Allan Nevins was godfather of oral history, Allan Nevins never handled letters and this and that, but Louis Starr did all that stuff.

Morris: I remember him as a very impressive person.

Baum: Oh, very.

Morris: Sort of dramatic.

Baum: Charismatic and authoritative. And charming.

Morris: Yes.

Baum: And also wanted to have his way. There soon became a little war of the men, because Louis Starr was so—I don't mean to say domineering, but he was obviously the kingpin.

So these other guys, and there were lots of other guys there who were in their own world the kingpin, began to kind of rustle around and think that Louis had too much power and this and that, so there was always a little shoving and pushing, which I used to watch and think, "This is just like animals."

I don't think lions do that, but herds, where there is a king and eventually the young upstarts will push him off. But it takes quite a long time. So it seemed like the young upstarts were always rustling around, and there might have been an issue that they talked about, but whatever the issue was made no difference, it seemed to me.

Morris: It was the position.

Baum: It was the position, yes. And Louis held it for a very long time. He wasn't president all the time, but he was the kingpin. And Elizabeth Mason, his assistant—she was also very strong, and the two of them were an invincible team there.

Morris: Oh, and they were allied?

Baum: She managed the office, and Louis did all the PR work—and the outside work. Both of them were very strong-minded and definite. They knew what they were talking about.

- Morris: In terms of doing oral history.
- Baum: Right. I think I was always on Louis' side with this agitation, because it seemed to me Louis was right, and we women in the group, and there were women, were not part of the hustling and bumping around. [laughs]
- Morris: Not part of the status thing.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: Who were the other folks that were wanting their place in the sun?
- Baum: Oh, dear. Now, let's see. I read that list of all the people. I got to know all of these people I met at the Colloquiums. Remarkable people. Well, somebody who was always getting miffed about things was—
- Morris: Peter Olch was around until '69, at least, and '70. He was vice president in '69 and then president.
- Baum: President, yes. I don't think Peter was trying to be anything especially.
- Morris: And Gould Colman?
- Baum: Gould Colman. He was always trying to be something. Gould Colman finally resigned. He was angry about something.
- Morris: Oh, dear.
- Baum: A few people. Phil Brooks. No. Phil Brooks was a small, quiet, modest man. Everybody adored him.
- Morris: [Samuel] "Sam" [Hand], I remember as being one of the major players. Was he present at the beginning?
- Baum: I think maybe not the very first year. Well, who was hustling—
- Morris: Forrest [C.] Pogue?
- Baum: Forrest, yes. He was the George C. Marshall historian [from the George C. Marshall Research Foundation].
- Morris: Knox Mellon?
- Baum: When I tell you about all these people hustling around, I can't think of who I thought really thought they ought to be the head of something.
- Morris: Maybe the ones who talked about it didn't really—

- Baum: When I say all that, I can't think of any individual especially. I think it was just the team of all the other men. [laughs]
- And it never was put in those terms. The terms were always some issue. They never said who was the hotshot.
- Morris: Does that mean that there was, like, lobbying for who was going to get to be the next president? Was that important?
- Baum: Probably behind the scenes. I never was really one of the players. I certainly wasn't lobbying. Our office—Chita was a player, and Chita became secretary, and she was very active in the association. But the problem with our office was that other people were supported by their institution—and these were smaller institutions usually; big institutions like UC Berkeley don't care. But if you're a little institution and one of your men—and it was usually men who were fussing—is president of the Oral History Association, that, in your institution's eyes, is a good thing. And your institution also would allow you to work on Oral History Association things because they thought that was a good thing for the institution.
- Morris: Interesting.
- Baum: But UC Berkeley, or at least the Bancroft Library (and the rest of UC Berkeley didn't know what we were doing, didn't care) certainly wasn't interested. They didn't care, and Dr. Hart's idea was that we were hired to do oral history and not—this was for the other librarians. You did your librarian work, and if you wanted to be head of some association or get out a book or something like that, that was on your own time. So we never did Oral History Association work and got paid by the university. You had to not count on getting paid for those hours.
- Morris: Oh, my.
- Baum: So you can imagine that it was not encouraging to spend much time on outside associations.
- Morris: How did you get convinced that Berkeley should host the colloquium in 1970?
- Baum: I can't think of that. It probably was a terrible mistake.
- Morris: [laughs]
- Baum: [laughs] Because it took so much time. You cannot imagine! Still, even after it was over, I couldn't imagine how it could take so much time dealing with all these little things about putting together that colloquium.
- Morris: Yes.

- Baum: And we didn't pay for it with university money. The Oral History Association paid for one person. We hired a person just to do the colloquium.
- Morris: I remember. She did all the keeping track of people.
- Baum: Reservations and, oh, my goodness! At that point, I thought "I'm never going to be in charge of anything again." [laughs] But I think we did a wonderful job, better than any other time.
- One of the things—when we put together the colloquium, we wanted in the reservations to know [from] each person who was coming, what they were interested in, what subjects did their narrators want to talk about? And we put that in the list that you get when you come, who the participants are, where they come from, what their organization does. Our whole idea was that these people would all read that and run and meet people who were in similar situations, and I think they did.
- Morris: Did they have what they now call breakout meetings so that people who were working on politics could meet together and people who were working on agriculture and things of that type?
- Baum: I don't remember that.
- Morris: How did you divide up the chores between you at Berkeley and Jim Mink at UCLA?
- Baum: When we did the colloquium, you mean?
- Morris: Yes.
- Baum: Weren't they in charge of the program? Because I don't believe we got the speakers. I think Jim probably did that.
- Morris: There was a separate workshop. I don't know whether that was the day before or something like that. It was run by Gary [L.] Shumway and Harry Jeffrey. They were from Cal State, Fullerton.
- Baum: Yes. It was a new idea, and since then, the OHA has always had—the day before, they've had a workshop. The workshop is usually—one part of it is for beginners, real beginners, and one part is always advanced problems. Sometimes it's legal; legal is always a headache, legal problems. Of course, [recording] machinery. Advanced questions. I think we had a workshop on how to do sensitive questions and things like that, not at the beginner level. And lots of people went to those, the advanced ones. Those of us who were already operating for years went to those because they were real issue—
- Morris: Right, the issues of the day.

- Baum: Yes, yes. The other was always the workshop that began—how you get out your tape recorder and say hello.
- Morris: I don't know if that's true of other professional organizations, but the colloquia always seem to draw a lot of people in the immediate area that are interested in oral history but did not have any previous experience.
- Baum: Yes, that's why there was always a beginner's workshop and some advantage for new people, like a lower fee or something to try and get--. That was our whole role, was to move around the country. We always had our conference in a different part of the United States.
- Morris: To educate the world about oral history?
- Baum: Yes, make it possible [for people to attend.] And also because the members came from all over the United States—sometimes it would be near you, and you didn't have any travel costs, and sometimes it was far away. Now, the one place that we wanted to have it and they wanted to have us was Hawaii. Hawaii has an active oral history program. The State of Hawaii, somebody there, was willing to be very friendly and would like the Oral History Association to come there. Of course, all of us wanted to come.
- Morris: Yes.
- Baum: But the word always was, "My institution will not support travel to Hawaii."
- Morris: It's too frivolous, or something like that?
- Baum: Yes. It was, probably, for most people in the United States, more expensive. Too, you would be out surfing instead of doing anything professional, so the word always was, "My institution won't pay my way to Hawaii." [laughs] So we never could go to Hawaii. Of course, it would have been just as cheap for us here in California to go to Hawaii as a lot of other places in the United States.
- Morris: And over time, cheap flights to Hawaii have become more available.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: But, yes, the image is always that you go surfing or play golf.
- Baum: Yes, yes. So that was one of the little issues we always had. There were always two or three places in the country that wanted us to come, and we'd have to decide where to go.
- Morris: What struck me as surprising was that somehow, in April of 1970, the same year that you were going to work on having the colloquium right here, you

were on the nominating committee. The executive committee appointed you and John Stewart and somebody named William [Wyatt?] to the nominating committee. How did you manage to get—

- Baum: I don't remember that at all, Gaby. Since you read that, it may be true.
[laughs]
- Morris: Then it must not have been an arduous thing. The other members of the committee took care of it?
- Baum: Usually it was perfectly obvious who should be the next vice president, who then became president. It was often the person who had been in charge of the program of the colloquium the year before that got nominated as vice president. It was a regular stepping-stone all the way to the top. Yes, and I thought it worked very well. I felt the people they got in charge were always outstanding.
- [End audiofile 19, begin audiofile 20 (tape 20)]
- Morris: I guess Peter Olch decided he didn't want to go on as president in 1971, having taken over from Oscar Winther?
- Baum: Yes. It was very sad when Oscar Winther died. He was like a father figure. He was a professor of history.
- Morris: Did anybody know he was that ill?
- Baum: No. I don't know. He certainly didn't seem ill. Probably just like a lot of people. He suddenly dropped dead. They're fine 'til they drop dead.
- Morris: And Forrest Pogue had just published a lot of work on his military history.
- Baum: Yes, Forrest Pogue was a real leader in our organization. And he knew a lot of bigwigs in the government and so on because of working on the history of General Marshall. And he was funny. He was a good speaker.
- Morris: And Charlie Morrissey was vice president? You said he was there at the beginning.
- Baum: He was there at Big Bear.
- Morris: He was then working on the presidential oral histories?
- Baum: At the very beginning, Charlie Morrissey was in charge of the John F. Kennedy oral history program, and he had suddenly gotten that position

because at the time that President Kennedy was assassinated, Charlie Morrissey happened to be in Washington, assigned there by the Truman Library, to interview about Harry Truman. He was going around Washington, interviewing people who knew Harry Truman personally. And so he was the only person who knew anything about—I mean, he was the man on the spot.

He did an amazing job of putting together that, because the world of Washington was erupting. There was lots of pushing as to which faction of the Democratic party was going to take over the leadership now that John F. Kennedy was gone. Charlie was supposed to be sending out his interviewers, or himself usually, to interview people who played a very key part in the JFK administration, and whether their unit or who they were was going to become the next powerhouse of the Democratic party or whether some other unit of the Democratic party would. It was very touch and go. His interviews were—people wanted to read them.

People in the government wanted to read them right away. They were not history, they were the present. And so Charlie just had to jump in there right—I don't know how he did it. He just did a marvelous job. But he said some days he stayed in the office where his oral histories were.

Morris: So nobody could get at them?

Baum: So nobody could get at them, because there were people who were his superiors—of course, he was working for some agency; I don't know what.

Morris: The National Archives?

Baum: Yes?

Morris: They're the people that now do the presidential oral history projects.

Baum: I'm not sure that was who was in charge to begin with, but there were people who were his superiors, who wanted to know what was in those oral histories for their own purposes, and Charlie wouldn't allow that, and so it was touch a go a lot of times. And so he was very concerned about—what?—the confidentiality of interviews before they were released. Nobody should read them.

Morris: Was there a feeling that interviews should be kept confidential for a while after they were done, regardless of whether they were current politics or other subjects?

Baum: Yes. Yes, I think so, because, again, Columbia University—usually they just put their transcripts in the library, and they often weren't available for many years, often at the request of the interviewee. I mean, naturally at the request of the interviewee, but as you know, the organization can encourage the

interviewee to either put them under seal or let them come out or whatever, but they certainly didn't make them easy to get or to use. Purposely.

- Morris: That's interesting, because it seems like often people love to tell you their innermost thoughts and important events, but they quite often don't want anybody to see what they've said after they've told you all about it. It's an interesting human phenomenon.
- Baum: That has always—it is still—for me. I can't believe that putting oral histories on the Web, by putting them out where anybody can tune in on them is going to get candid interviews. I just can't imagine that anybody would wish to be out there in public six weeks after they've spoken.
- Morris: Was this an issue or discussed at colloquia ever?
- Baum: Oh, yes.
- Morris: Charlie always seems to have been in the councils of important decisions, but he doesn't seem to have been part of this rivalry thing. Is that an accurate observation?
- Baum: Yes, I think so. Well, Charlie is always joking. You have a feeling Charlie feels strongly what he feels about, but you wouldn't know it. I can't think if Charlie was in the rivalry thing, although in a way I don't think he wasn't.
- Morris: And we haven't talked about Knox Mellon. He was treasurer for seven years, and he seemed to be involved in moving things forward.
- Baum: Knox was in charge of oral history and a professor at some Catholic college in Los Angeles, which I think went out of business. I can't think of the name of it.
- Morris: And then he was up here in Northern California for a while.
- Baum: Later he became state historian or something for a while, when Jerry [Edmund G. Brown, Jr.] Brown was governor.
- Morris: Carlotta, his wife—
- Baum: Yes, Carlotta was appointments secretary for Jerry Brown.
- Morris: Yes.
- Baum: Then they moved to Riverside, and Knox was teaching at UC Riverside. Oh, and he was the head of the Mission Inn Foundation or something. Mission Inn, you know, in Riverside is a great historical thing, and they have a lot of history stuff.

- Morris: Oh, that's interesting, yes.
- Baum: But they don't do oral histories. But his work there was primarily history. And Knox wasn't agitating about being any president or anything.
- Morris: But he seems to have put a lot of time in on colloquia and OHA affairs.
- Baum: Yes, he did. It was nice when he was up here for a while. I don't know what he was doing up here. It wasn't when he was in Sacramento. He had a business which was contract oral history. Not oral history, history. He worked for cities or something and put together their historical work.
- Morris: Sort of a pioneer in—what is it?—the independent historian movement?
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: What I remember, being around the office in the seventies, was that there was a lot of talk about goals and guidelines, that the association seemed to be constantly revising them.
- Baum: Yes, and they were a matter of a lot of argument. That was the thing we really worked on. Chita and I worked on goals and guidelines. We spent a tremendous amount of time. It must have interfered with our other work, and I do want to put in here that we never charged for it. I mean, we didn't put it on the bill for what ROHO paid us.
- Morris: Did that involve meetings with others concerned with that issue?
- Baum: I think Chita and I were the leading proponents. But of course we were in constant—I think maybe Chita was probably officially on it. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know if I was officially on that, but we worked and cared about the goals and guidelines, which was our ethics.
- Morris: Yes. The first reference I came across is in 1968. That was the first goals and guidelines committee, and Chita was on that, but it was still under discussion 1979, when there was the Wingspread Conference on that subject.
- Baum: Yes, from time to time it's come up for revision. It's sort of like a continuing issue. Now I can't remember which things we felt so strongly about. Boy, did we care about that! Or what the other side was.
- Morris: Yes, people did feel very strongly about it.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: But last night I read over them. You and David [K.] Dunaway included a set of goals and guidelines in your anthology [*Oral History, An Interdisciplinary*

Anthology, AASLH, 1984], and then ten years later, [Donald A.] Don Ritchie has a set of goals and guidelines in his book *Doing Oral History* [Twayne, 1995]. The wording is very different, but the issues are the same: one's responsibility to the interviewee, and your professional responsibility, and your responsibility to make the material accessible but not hurt anybody's feelings. It's really interesting that there has been such a lot of discussion about it.

Baum: Yes.

Morris: You've kept on going to the meetings over the years.

Baum: Yes.

Morris: Is it still under discussion?

Baum: I haven't gone for two years, and since I'm not a participant any more in any way, I'm not a part of arguments.

Morris: Did Chita do some traveling to keep up with the discussion around the country?

Baum: No, I don't think so. They'd started having meetings—they had one winter meeting of the council, and I think one year, when I was on the council, that I went to a winter meeting, which is very nice because it's just the officers, and you stay in a nice hotel, and it's very pleasant to sit and argue over these things with just a few people who are really engaged in it.

Morris: Right, right. And did OHA pay for those?

Baum: Sometimes—yes, I think they did. They paid for the hotel, I'm pretty sure.

Morris: Yes?

Baum: They may have paid for part of our travel.

Morris: Did it make much difference to how OHA operated or what they were able to get done after 1975, when [Ronald E.] Ron Marcello became executive director?

Baum: I can't think that, Gaby.

Morris: Well, he'd been around. He'd been active in the organization, and by then, there were—[refers to documents]. Well, by then, there was the 1975 colloquium, which was in Asheville, North Carolina, home of Thomas Wolfe and various Rockefellers. There were 250 registrants, which was a record.

That year, also, there was the first regional workshop, which was held in Fullerton, California.

Baum: I took note of that, too. I remember meeting Ron Marcello at the meeting that was at—was it Arden House? He was such a young man then.

Morris: Yes, but we all were. [laughs]

Baum: Yes, yes, yes.

Morris: Yes, he'd been around for a while. A couple of years before, November of 1973, there's a note that the council was considering hiring an executive secretary, with the comment that dues may have to be increased to provide for this, so we didn't rush into it; it took a couple of years.

Baum: Oh, yes. We were always fighting about dues.

Morris: Yes.

Baum: I'm sure every organization in the world does that. They have to raise the dues, and the people who stand and sob that we will leave out all the locals and stuff and make it hard to belong and this and that. I'm sure some things were just a part of being an association.

The one issue that came up again and again, and Louis Starr—the issue was should we vote for officers at the colloquium and elect officers at the colloquium or should we have a mail ballot.

Morris: Oh, what an interesting question, yes.

Baum: Yes. As you can imagine, the people who believed in the mail ballot went—that was more democratic, and all those who couldn't afford to come to the colloquium should have a right to vote. Sounds very good. Louis Starr said we should just continue to vote at the colloquium. I was on his side. That had a lot of financial advantages because getting out a mail ballot was quite expensive, to send out nominations, and the whole thing was quite a substantial expense. I thought that the people who came to the colloquium knew what the issues were; the people who were home didn't know. And also the most important thing about officers is usually their personality, and you don't know their personality unless you're there. Well, that issue always came up, and Louis Starr was so good at beating out the democratic types. [laughs]

Oh, he knew his rules; he knew his *Robert's Rules of Order*, and it always seemed to be like whoever knows the *Robert's Rules of Order* best, wins. Almost.

Morris: There is something to that, yes.

Baum: Oh, I know who was in competition with Louis. I forget the other guy's name. It seems like democratic types were for the mail ballot, and old line establishments were for the—

Morris: Would strengthen the organization to vote in person?

Baum: Yes. I always thought I was a democratic type, but I always voted for the organization. I thought that was really right. And eventually we lost.

Morris: Is it now a mail ballot?

Baum: It's a mail ballot, and as every organization I've ever belonged to that has a mail ballot—I vote religiously—and usually I have no reason to know why I'm voting.

[tape interruption]

Baum: I may be wrong. Louis was going to get old and eventually lose. Oh, there's Suzanne. Do you know what time it is?

Morris: I do. Let me find my watch. It is eleven thirty. Do you need to wind up?

Baum: Yes.

Morris: Okay, we can do that.

[End of session]

Interview with Willa Baum
 Interviewed by Gabrielle Morris
 Interview 12: May 26, 2005
 [Audiofile 20 continued (begin tape 20, side B)]

Morris: This is May 26, 2005, my second session with Willa Baum.

Yes, we were going to talk about Earl Warren today. The catalogue says the project started in 1969. Was that when you and Chita started the idea of documenting our former governor?

Baum: Let me see. We really got underway—it must have been in 1962 because it was the fiftieth anniversary of the Class of 1912, the famous Class of 1912, of which Earl Warren and Newton Drury and Horace Albright—who else? There were other people we interviewed from that class. It was a very famous class. Robert Gordon Sproul hung out with those people, but he was [Class of] 1913. Anyway, the Class of 1912 came to Berkeley for a great anniversary.

Morris: Oh, a reunion.

Baum: A reunion, fiftieth reunion. Now, by that time Chita had become very close friends of Newton Drury—

Morris: Oh. How so?

Baum: —and Horace Albright. Well, she'd interviewed Newton Drury, and Newton Drury was—

Morris: He was the environmentalist.

Baum: He was the environmentalist and—golly, was it Save-the-Redwoods? Save-the-Redwoods League, I think. Anyway, Chita had interviewed Newton Drury. We weren't doing an environmental unit at that time at all, but she had interviewed a fellow who was the engineer for buildings and grounds at Cal. We were sort of picking off UC great people. And he said, when he finished, "You know who you really ought to interview is my neighbor here, Newton Drury."

So Chita goes over [laughs], knocks on the door, and asks Newton Drury who he is [laughs] and so on. And, well, from then, Newton Drury was just our adviser. He was a great help to the office and became very good friends with Chita's family. And Horace Albright was Newton Drury's dear friend. Horace Albright had been head of the national parks [National Park Service], and Newton Drury had been head of the California parks. They were bosom buddies of Earl Warren's.

Morris: As classmates.

Baum: As classmates, and the classmates had hung together—somebody who was treasurer of the United States was in that class, too.

Morris: In the Class of 1912 was what, a couple of hundred people? It wasn't the gigantic—

Baum: Oh, yes, that's right, it was much smaller. I don't know if it was a couple of hundred, but it was certainly nothing like the classes we have now that nobody would know anybody unless they were in their exact field.

So Newton Drury and Horace Albright were eager to get—we'd been thinking—you know, we must get Earl Warren, and we'd been talking about that, and Earl Warren came here to Berkeley for this reunion, and he was in the Bancroft Library, which was in a different place than it is now. He was there, and Chita and I were skulking around, along with all these fine gentlemen, and walking around with Newton Drury, being introduced and so on.

At that time, Earl Warren didn't think he should be interviewed because he was chief justice, and he didn't think that it was appropriate that the chief justice, who—everything he did was confidential or whatever—

Morris: While he was in office, yes.

Baum: Yes. And we did talk to him about if we did it, we for sure would not go past his governor's days. We said we were only interested in the California governorship. When he went national, we were out of there.

Morris: That was his point, or that's what you and Chita said?

Baum: That's what we said, and I don't know whose point it was, but that would be okay with Earl Warren. And he wouldn't say yes, he would do it. And he was not the only person we were going to interview. We were already thinking of all the other persons who had been prominent in his governorship. But we didn't think we could really do an Earl Warren project without the blessings of Earl Warren.

Morris: You didn't want to do it without his blessing.

Baum: We didn't think we could do it, yes, that all of his comrades and colleagues and former officials would not do it unless they knew that Earl Warren favored the project.

Morris: And besides, they might call him up and say, "These people want to talk to me. Is it okay?"

- Baum: Yes, yes. And I told somebody this in this little interviewing group, so I'll tell you again: The clincher was some summer—this would be 1962, and very shortly thereafter, Horace Albright went to Greece on a cruise. He and his wife were great travelers, and they went to Greece on a cruise, and they climbed up some famous mountain there that all tourists climb up, and when they got to the top—
- Morris: Olympus?
- Baum: Probably. I don't remember that, but all I know is that there was Earl Warren and Mrs. [Nina] Warren. [laughs] And they, too—I think they had come on [Benjamin H.] Ben Swig's yacht, and they were climbing up the same mountain, so of course Horace and Earl had a great, grand reunion, and Horace Albright said, "Now, you've really got to do this oral history project." [laughs]
- Morris: Oh, my goodness. Halfway around the world.
- Baum: And Earl Warren said yes. [laughs] I thought that was a marvelous story.
- Morris: I should say so. It shows the loyalty of Earl Warren's friends, certainly. Yes.
- Baum: Then we had to get money.
- Morris: Right.
- Baum: So if we talk about starting in 1962, working on it, it took us till 1969 to get any money.
- Morris: There were [grants from] the law clerks of Earl Warren, and then there was National Endowment for the Humanities. Which came first?
- Baum: We applied to the National Endowment for the Humanities. We may have applied two years that we failed, or at least one year, but we did an awful lot of work putting this project together, thinking who were the key persons to interview.
- Morris: Who wrote the proposal?
- Baum: I presume Chita did most of it. And I can't remember who was on our team when we worked on that.
- Morris: Not many people. Suzanne?
- Baum: Suzanne never was interested in that.
- Morris: June Hogan, I don't think, was there as early as '62.

- Baum: I don't think she was there in '62, but—
- Morris: She didn't like fund-raising.
- Baum: She was going to be hired if we got the money.
- Morris: Yes.
- Baum: She wouldn't do fund-raising.
- Morris: Was there someone on the actual Bancroft staff?
- Baum: No, no. Nobody in the Bancroft Library was the least interested in anything we were doing. [looking at list of staff] Edna Daniel, no Let's see. Catherine, no. Fern Ingersoll, no. Rosemary Levenson, no, no, no. Harriet Nathan. I don't remember that she worked on the Earl Warren thing.
- Morris: Did Malca?
- Baum: She would have kibitzed about it. Malca Chall came in 1967. Yes, I'm sure Malca would have been involved in the planning. Well, you're right: there wasn't anybody here.
- Morris: Did we know anybody at NEH?
- Baum: No.
- Morris: Was Corinne Gilb or Irene Prescott—were those folks—
- Baum: She was gone. Irene Prescott left in 1962. She wasn't involved. You know, I can't remember who was involved. But I can remember we worked like dogs.
- The main dog must have been Chita. But we did put in several grant proposals of different things. I can't remember what they were, but I know that sometimes we worked till one o'clock or two o'clock in the morning. Our lights were burning, and our devoted staffs were working, and there were deadlines, and oh, goodness. Chita and I were going to write a musical operetta [laughs], because all the things that went wrong in grant proposal bids. [laughs]
- Morris: Hadn't there been some grants from Resources for the Future?
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: You'd written grants before.

- Baum: Yes, and we didn't write that grant, I don't think. We just got the money. Chita met the head of Resources for the Future, who may have been a friend of her husband's. We were already documenting some forestry stuff.
- Morris: Right.
- Baum: So it was sort of one of those things where if you know somebody—because I think that was one of our first grants.
- Morris: The forestry project.
- Baum: Yes, the Resources for the Future. I don't remember if it was the history of the parks or—
- Morris: Earl Warren, I recall being told, was the first big grant.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: It must have been so painful it just escapes your mind.
- Baum: No, even unpainful things escape my mind. [laughs]
- Morris: Were there many faculty members offering assistance by then?
- Baum: No. We had to have a faculty adviser, and I can't remember who was our first faculty adviser. The one I remember was—well, [Ira Michael] Mike Heyman was the faculty adviser for a long time.
- Morris: Yes, but was Adrian Kragen before him?
- Baum: And Adrian Kragen was on when somebody was away. Or maybe Walton Bean was. I don't know.
- Morris: When did Walton Bean become—
- Baum: Because Walton Bean was California history, too.
- Morris: Right. And do you go find him?
- Baum: Oh, no, we were born together, because he was born in the same year as—he had a history of the University of California book he was working on. And he had his own staff doing some interviews. He became our faculty adviser very soon, and he was always our faculty adviser, our main faculty adviser as long as he was here. And one or two years, he went off to Pakistan, and so we would have had other faculty advisers, but Walton Bean was our adviser.
- Morris: Did he have any advice on writing grant proposals?

- Baum: No. There wasn't a lot of grant proposal writing going on. This was a new development in the world, I think.
- Morris: The federal money for things like that came along, I guess it must have been in the Kennedy years.
- Baum: I don't know, but there was eventually a department of the university that administered grants, but I don't think it was there when we started.
- Morris: No. The fundraising used to sort of run through the Alumni Association.
- Baum: Yes, that wasn't grants. They had some money that they gave out once a year, and we were always the recipient for something or other. We always applied.
- Morris: Later on, it became a really time-consuming process to get your grant proposal approved by various channels—
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: —in the university. Did you need to that with the Warren proposal?
- Baum: Not in the first, not in the first. Yes, every time that they'd set up a special office for anything, it would become twice as hard to get your thing. It was an office that was not set up to help you get it but to cause you a lot of trouble, and then they also had to keep raising the percentage of—
- Morris: Overhead.
- Baum: —overhead, to pay for the grant office, so not only did they bother you, but they had to be supported.
- Morris: The grant proposals never included things like space, desks and telephones and things like that. I thought the university felt that that was their—
- Baum: Yes, and as time went on, we put in the value—maybe not the space, but we always put in the value of a lot of things the university provided, which might have been space or telephones or oversight, which would be the head librarian and all sorts of people like that. We'd put a percent of their time, because we had to have matching money. You always had to have matching money, and how you could get matching money, who knows?
- Morris: Who was the university librarian then? Did he have any ideas or was he interested in the Warren project?
- Baum: Nobody was interested, Gaby, not the librarian, not the Bancroft librarian, not anybody. It was our baby. [laughs]

- Morris: What about some of the wise people in the Oral History Association, like Charlie Morrissey? Did he know the ropes at the NEH or anything like that?
- Baum: Let's see, now. The Oral History Association began in 1966.
- Morris: Okay, so they weren't around.
- Baum: They weren't around. We certainly didn't know any of them, no.
- Morris: You were really striking out—
- Baum: Yes. And I think I've told you—I told somebody that our first grant—I wish I had a copy of that. It was a splendid grant proposal we wrote, and it came up to \$100,000.
- Morris: This is the first Warren proposal that got accepted.
- Baum: No, it didn't get accepted; it got un-accepted, because it was too expensive. They told us they couldn't possibly—it just couldn't possibly cost that much. It was a good project, but they couldn't spend \$100,000 on it. If we'd get it down to \$10,000, they'd consider it.
- Morris: [laughs]
- Baum: Really. And so I said, "Okay, we'll get it down to \$10,000," so we took the same grant proposal and redid it one way or another so that it came out to \$10,000.
- Morris: That was about three interviews, wasn't it?
- Baum: Our interviews weren't quite as expensive then as they are now or became later, and so it did pass when it was \$10,000.
- Morris: Wow.
- Baum: And then there was going to be, plus, matching money, and we had to raise matching money, and that's where the law clerks of Earl Warren came in, because we were really scuttling around finding out—I can't remember what else we used for matching money, but the law clerks put in some money.
- Morris: Talk about the law clerks. Whose brilliant idea was that?
- Baum: I can't remember that. Since we'd been working for so many years on this thing, we did have a lot of—as time went on—oh, I'm sorry, I can't—
- Morris: Mike Heyman, for one, had been a Warren law clerk.

- Baum: And it might have been Mike Heyman's idea, but it was somebody from the Boalt Hall who came up with that. The law clerks had gathered some money to do something, and they had it sitting there for a long time, and they hadn't ever come up with the right thing to do with it, so—Jim—[Makes three clucking noises.] There was a guy who sort of managed the finances of Boalt Hall. Very nice guy. Anyway, he came up, I think, with the idea that this little sum of money, which might have been \$5,000 or something like that—
- Morris: Compared to \$10,000, that was pretty—
- Baum: Well, that's pretty good, yes. Yes, it was. And it was also very good to have them listed as sponsors. So I can't answer that, Gaby.
- Morris: The law clerks really pitched in.
- Baum: No, they didn't have to do anything. They'd already put their money in. It was already in the Boalt Hall. It was a sum of money that they were going to find a worthy cause for, and they found us or we found them. I don't think we got individual money for that. I don't think people contributed, but I'm sure in the first volumes of the Earl Warren project it tells all that, because one of the things we were most rigorous [about] is we should be transparent. We didn't have that word "transparent," but we felt that anybody who used our materials had to know how they were funded.
- Morris: Right.
- Baum: And so when we put out anything, we always included all the information in the introduction about how the money was raised, and we had the names of sponsors and all that, so just reading our introductions, one can trace what we did. And as soon as we got the money, we started hiring people to work on it. Is that when you came in, about?
- Morris: Pretty soon. I didn't come till January 1970.
- Baum: Well, that would be about when we would have started hiring people, I think.
- Morris: Chita already had a drawer full of transcripts, because that's what I started doing, was editing her transcripts, which gave me a wonderful understanding of what the project was all about.
- Baum: And how did we find you, or how did you find us?
- Morris: June Hogan.
- Baum: Yes?
- Morris: June Hogan was a neighbor of mine.

- Baum: Yes?
- Morris: And June Hogan had come to ROHO from Harriet Nathan. They had worked together in the League of Women Voters.
- Baum: Oh, yes.
- Morris: And I had worked in the League of Women Voters, and I had also been a historian for the Air Force. I think that impressed you and Chita more than the League of Women Voters.
- Baum: No, no. I really emphasized hiring past presidents [of?] the League of Women Voters.
- Morris: The league is an organization which conducts interviews.
- Baum: Oh, and they're people who think seriously about the pros and cons of government, yes.
- Morris: One of the things that a local league does is fairly regularly send out two lady league—now two members—to interview each city councilman and school board member and local assemblyman and things like that, so one was used to dealing with people who did not want to answer your questions—
- Baum: [laughs]
- Morris: —and people who wished to brag about the wonderful things they'd done, and other people who wanted to explain to you just about everything that had been going on, so it was—
- Baum: Yes, it was good training, yes.
- Morris: Yes, and June was moving.
- Baum: That's right.
- Morris: She and her family moved over the hill, and so she was retiring.
- Baum: And she never really did an interview, or she did one interview or something. And she had been a journalist for the *Chronicle*, wasn't it?
- Morris: She was the woman's page editor, and very knowledgeable.
- Baum: Yes, yes.
- Morris: As I say, I remember her telling me that it was the fundraising that she didn't want to have anything to do with. I think she worked with Chita on several.

- Baum: That could be.
- Morris: Did some of the basic research. I don't know whose idea it was to set up first a timeline and then sort of a databank. We put everything on three by five cards so that after one person had looked up things about the given election campaign, somebody else could come along and use the same notes. Chita and June and probably Malca must have done a lot of reading.
- Baum: Yes. [looking at catalogue listing of ROHO employees] Mimi—
- Morris: Mimi Stein came in 1969, yes.
- Baum: I think so. She was Mimi Feingold then, and then she turned into Stein.
- Morris: Right.
- Baum: We're still trying to meet with her because we meet with our old staff once in a while.
- Morris: She's still around in Mill Valley.
- Baum: Yes. She's been invited to our Marin County meetings, and she hasn't come so far. [James] Jim Rowland—it said 1978, when this catalogue came out.
- Morris: Joan [Ariff] was around [the office] when I first came in, but I think she was doing other things.
- Baum: Yes, I don't think she ever worked in government. She was art. She was art history. Well, I'm sure Malca must have worked in that. Edna—no, Edna wouldn't have worked on that; most of you wouldn't remember Edna. She was one of my earliest coworkers. Joyce Henderson. I think we hired her about this time—she was hired in 1970?
- Morris: Right. We had already begun developing a list of black political leaders.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: As a kind of a subunit in the project.
- Baum: Right. Joyce was our only black interviewer, wasn't she? And she was a graduate of Mills.
- Morris: And I think she was a graduate student of Hilary Fry's? Somehow I think that was—
- Baum: You think so? I don't think so.

- Morris: I don't know, but I know she was so good she got hired away from us fairly shortly, to start an oral history program up north.
- Baum: It was her husband.
- Morris: Ah.
- Baum: Her husband got transferred to Oregon or somewhere, and we lost Joyce, and she was working on a big project. It would have been black churches.
- And Joyce knew a lot about the churches, and yet she was not so involved that she would look like an insider and that some people wouldn't talk to her. Oh, yes. Well, losing Joyce was a sad blow, but I think Gabrielle Morris was part of that—as we got some money. Harriet Nathan, of course.
- Morris: For the Warren project, was there a fund-raising letter to anybody and everybody that Warren knew?
- Baum: You know, I can't remember that, Gaby. I can't remember that. My, that would be an advanced idea, wouldn't it? [laughs] I don't know.
- Morris: It sort of rose to the surface.
- Baum: Yes, yes.
- Morris: Once there were enough people to send a mailing to. [laughs]
- Baum: [laughs] You know, I can't tell—
- Morris: Nowadays there are all kinds of workshops on raising money and advice on soliciting your constituents, but I don't remember when those things started.
- Baum: They weren't done in those—I mean, it was not done. The whole world was different then, and you got your money from your institutions.
- Morris: Yes.

[End audiofile 20, begin audiofile 21 (tape 21)]

- Morris: Was the university providing some support for either the Warren project or the Oral History Office at that point?
- Baum: The university provided all the money we had for the Oral History Office, and the money came from the president's office, in a direct line to our office.
- Morris: And that continued?

- Baum: No. After a while—let me see, so long as it was a direct line, it was okay. It came through the library. We were part of the library, but the budget was sequestered away from the library. Then the next step that happened was that we got transferred into the Bancroft Library, and then our budget went through the Bancroft Library, and then there was a point, which I can't remember, but it ceased to be a line item. This is what they called them. And we had to try and keep our money against all the other departments of the Bancroft Library.
- Morris: If you're not a line item, what are you?
- Baum: You're—there's, like, a general—
- Morris: Not a specified amount.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: Was that under Dr. Hart?
- Baum: Yes, Dr. Hart. They took our money, and I've been angry ever since. They did shave off the money we had.
- Morris: But they did keep separate money that ROHO raised.
- Baum: Oh, the money we raised was always separate, and it was not pestered. The only money they took would have been money from the university that came in a clump to the Bancroft Library. No, we always kept our money for every single project. Every dollar was separate for exactly what it had been given for. It took us a lot of accounting, but we kept them straight.
- Morris: Did it make a difference to how the Oral History Office functioned once Jim Hart became director of the Bancroft Library?
- Baum: No, I don't think so. Let's see, Bob Becker was only a fill-in for somebody who was away.
- Morris: What about Peter Hanff?
- Baum: Yes, and he was a fill-in for something, but way later, probably after Dr. Hart became ill.
- Morris: Yes, Peter was acting director when Jim Hart became ill. But he'd been around a long time.
- Baum: Oh, he'd been around. Yes, he'd been around. Jim Holliday was director for one year, but I can't remember any of those people taking much interest, or supervision, for which I was grateful because we just went on our own way.

They could certainly advise us, and Dr. Hart often suggested people we should interview, and faculty members and people would come to Jim Hart and suggest people to be interviewed or subjects or things, and he would let me know.

- Morris: Any particular people that Hart suggested or the faculty came and expressed interest in oral history being recruited?
- Baum: I think I've told the amazing story of [the] Julia Morgan project.
- Morris: Not to me.
- Baum: Not to you. Well, I have told it, so I won't tell it. That came through Jim Hart. Well, Dr. Hart paid more attention to us than anybody previously had, and he liked to know what was going on. He really wanted to know. Others didn't even care. But he liked to know, and I always sent him lots of notes that told him if anything was cooking, or possibilities or anything like that. I kept him very well informed.
- Morris: How about faculty members? For a while it seemed like the Institute of Governmental Studies was helpful.
- Baum: Yes, that was Eugene [C.] Lee. We conferred with him a lot, and that would have been in the Earl Warren project on state government, which was their subject. And other than that, I can't remember. Gene Lee used to come up to our office once in a while, looking around.
- Morris: This was in Room 486 on the top floor of the library annex?
- Baum: Right, yes. And when we moved into 486, Gene Lee was around the corner. I forget what he was; he wasn't head of the Institute of Governmental Studies yet, but it was something about state government.
- Morris: Mark Twain wasn't there yet?
- Baum: Yes, Mark Twain was there.
- Morris: Where had the office been before moving into Room 486?
- Baum: It was down on the first floor, when you come in the big main doors, on the north side.
- Morris: Facing the Campanile?
- Baum: No, facing North Gate.
- Morris: Toward Hearst Street, okay.

- Baum: If you looked out the door, you could see North Gate off in the distance, and those big marble steps, the big marble steps that go up like so [demonstrates], to the second floor.
- Morris: Yes.
- Baum: Okay, we were under the marble steps. [Laughter] And we were really the first office—well, the Morrison Room, you would bump into before us, but otherwise we were the first door. Our door was always open because there was no air in that room at all, and we had to have—
- Morris: No windows?
- Baum: No windows at all.
- Morris: Oh, dear.
- Baum: And nobody was allowed to work more than half time because they would become ill. [laughs] So everybody who came to the library stopped in—I think I remember it might have been one hundred. They stopped in to ask us where whatever was, whatever they were looking for, and then they said, “Oh, oral history. What is that?” And then we had to go through a little song and dance about what oral history was. So we were very grateful when we finally moved way up to the top, where nobody could find us except people who really came to talk to us.
- Morris: Did it take a lot of negotiating to get that nice big bright room on the fourth floor?
- Baum: No, I don’t know how we got that. I cannot remember that at all. It might have had to do—no, it happened quite soon, and I don’t think we were even part of the Bancroft Library yet. I cannot remember, Gaby.
- Morris: You were the Regional Cultural History—
- Baum: Yes, Regional Cultural History Project was our name, to keep us disguised, so nobody would know we were oral history.
- Morris: I see. Why didn’t you want to be known as oral history?
- Baum: Because we knew that we couldn’t interview everybody.
- Morris: Ah.
- Baum: And we wished to be able to confer with people, find out what they knew, what kind of people they were, and then invite them to do an oral history if they seemed like they could give us good information.

- Morris: Going back to the Warren project—
- Baum: But we've lost the Warren project entirely.
- Morris: Yes. How was it decided who would be interviewed first with that first \$15,000—
- Baum: Ten thousand. Oh, that's right.
- Morris: Ten thousand from NEH and—
- Baum: And the matching. That's right. Yes, you're right.
- Morris: And then five thousand from squeezing the piggy bank somehow.
- Baum: Yes. I don't remember any of that, Gaby. And to tell you the truth, I didn't have to. There was a team, of which Chita was the head, [unclear passage] that met together and worked things out very efficiently, very effectively, very thoughtfully. They didn't need me, who knew not that much about California state government.
- Morris: By the time I got there [1970], I remember the rule was that we'd start small, [interviewing people] at the periphery, as it were.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: And then pile up these reservoirs of information before going to the big people.
- Baum: Yes. I know. That was part of our idea, that before you get to your biggest fish, you needed to know what the background information was. You didn't want to insult him by not asking intelligent questions, so that's why you'd start with people who were lower down on the order of deciding what was happening in government.
- Morris: Didn't you [Willa] do a couple of interviews with people in Bakersfield who had known Earl Warren in his boyhood?
- Baum: Yes, we did, and those, of course, you would start early because they were oldest.
- Morris: Did you and Chita drive down together?
- Baum: No, I think I only did one or two, maybe. I don't know. But Chita and I didn't drive down together.
- Morris: Did you summon them up to Berkeley?

- Baum: I can't answer that either, Gaby. I don't know. But I do remember interviewing people in Bakersfield.
- Morris: Was the next NEH grant as difficult to get approved as the first one?
- Baum: Probably not, because by then, one, we had something to show—not that anybody ever came to look.
- Morris: Really? There was no site visit?
- Baum: Oh, and that was the most, to me, discouraging thing, that they make you write up all this junk, stuff, and they evaluate it on how highfalutin your words are, but nobody ever looked to see what the material you were turning out was like.
- Morris: They never read any of the manuscripts?
- Baum: I don't think so, no.
- Morris: How discouraging.
- Baum: Yes, and I don't think they did for any of those projects, so that most of the projects, they just went by who the big wheels—you had names of advisers, who were often not going to do anything.
- Morris: Did you ever hear if some of them were contacted by NEH? Did anybody ever write to Mike Heyman and say, "What about this Earl Warren project?"?
- Baum: I never heard about that, no.
- Morris: That's fascinating. Didn't NEH have review panels for proposals?
- Baum: The review panels reviewed the grant proposals, and they met—I think Chita was on one once, one year. And I reviewed things that they sent me by mail. I probably reviewed two or three grant proposals a year. Now, in some instances, I might know who was doing it, and of course within the field, little ruffles would go out as to how good their stuff was, or not good. But no, I thought the whole grant proposal thing was—I don't know how it could have been better, but it—
- Morris: Yes. When you're talking about the first one in '67, '68, there weren't that many—you know, the field was just getting established. You wonder how they established criteria.
- Baum: Oral history.
- Morris: Yes.

- Baum: But it isn't just oral history, it's California government, and they'd get people in the field of whatever you were interviewing about. It wasn't just oral history people.
- Morris: You never got any feedback from somebody who would say, "Ha, ha, I read your proposal."
- Baum: No, I never did. And I don't think I ever said to anybody that "I read your proposal," but I don't recall ever reading a proposal of any of my friends, so maybe they had a way of not sending you—certain places would get all the proposals. I'm sure that Columbia University had their paw, hand, on every grant proposal.
- Morris: Did they seem to have a better connection to Washington?
- Baum: Oh, yes. Oh, I tell you, being out in the West was just sad. I mean, in terms of granting agencies, and it wasn't just the NEH, California hardly existed.
- Morris: You hear that in many connections. Which is really fascinating when you think of the mystique of California and the West as such a big thing in American mythology—you know, "Go west, young man" and all.
- Baum: Yes, but it's just a mystical place. It just isn't a great big major part of the United States. Of course, we weren't the biggest state then, but as far as New Yorkers or Connecticut or any of those people were concerned, we were not really serious.
- Morris: Oh, dear.
- Baum: No, wait, I should say NEH—there was a lady who was—oh, she was a great woman. Oh, why can't I remember these people? They ought to get their credit.
- Morris: I remember a woman who came out to the colloquium in San Diego.
- Baum: Yes, she came to colloquiums. That's probably the one.
- Morris: That was, what, late seventies?
- Baum: Somebody did come from NEH; maybe she even came to our office. But the person who came was somebody from Rockefeller Foundation, and they had sent him out—I think he was shopping around the country for possible projects and what they looked like and so on. His name was Peter, I think.
- And he came out, and he actually came into the office and looked at things. He looked at transcripts; he read texts. We weren't even applying to them or doing anything, but he was just interested. And they are the ones who gave us

a grant without a grant proposal, I think, or almost without, to do the suffragists when NEH turned us down, and saved that project, because those ladies were on their very last gasp.

Morris: Very elderly.

Baum: Yes.

Morris: Well, now, Chita Fry had begun working on the suffragists before the Warren project got started, hadn't she?

Baum: Um—

Morris: She was in the editing stage with Alice Paul and the other lady who lived here in the Bay Area. Her son had just died.

Baum: Yes. Sarah Bard Field was very early [interviewed in 1961-1963]. What's the—[makes clicking sounds as she tries to remember]. Let me see when some of these—well, let's see when Alice Paul started [interviewed in 1972, 1973.] [Looks at catalog] Because certainly as the Suffragists Project started, Chita's first interviews [were quite early,] but—well, here's Mabel Vernon; it was finished in 1976; interviewed 1972 and '73. That's when the Earl Warren project would have really been going, wouldn't it?

Morris: Right, but NEH might well have turned down another proposal, saying they were already funding ROHO to do Warren so they weren't going to fund the suffragists.

Baum: No, that's not why they turned it down; it was their peer review thing. Well, let's see, Amelia Fry interviewed—oh, no, Sarah Bard Field; that doesn't count because she did that way early, so Amelia Fry in 1972 and '73 was interviewing Alice Paul, and that's when she was in Washington, D.C., and spent a lot of time with her.

Morris: Wasn't she also working with Warren [in Washington, preparing to interview him?]

Baum: Yes. So that would have all been going forward at the same time, but Chita began interviewing Alice Paul—well, it says 1972. She began interviewing her before she had any money. She knew that Alice Paul was the most important person in this project and that Alice Paul was going to die and that Alice Paul had agreed to be interviewed—

Morris: And, by golly, she was going to get interviewed.

Baum: That's right, so she just went and paid her own way. We chalked up her hours, but we didn't pay her, and that's when this guy from Rockefeller Foundation came out and rescued the project.

Morris: Oh, that's wonderful.

Baum: Yes. I mean, it's one of our absolutely most used projects, but the reason it was turned down by NEH—other research centers had thought of these suffragists and had asked them to be interviewed, and they would not be interviewed, and the reason was they lived at the women's—

Morris: National Women's Party?

Baum: National Woman's Party house, or they gathered there, and they were working very hard on the Equal Rights Amendment, and they had all agreed, especially Alice Paul, who was their leader, that they were not going to be distracted in any way from the important job, and that they would only work on the ERA until it was passed. And so she told Chita that. Chita said, "We've got to do you, Alice. We've got to." And Alice Paul said, "I've got to do the ERA first, but if you will come and help me get this passed and if we do get it passed, at that point I will do the interview."

Morris: Oh, that's wonderful, yes.

Baum: And Chita did go back several—at least twice, I think, when Alice Paul would call her and say, "We've got a big thing coming up in Congress, and we need all the help we can get. Could you come?"

And Chita would fly right out to the National Woman's Party and stay there, and for a week or so she would go around Congress and talk to congressmen about the Equal Rights Amendment, and plot with Alice Paul who to talk to, and this and that. And by golly, it passed. It didn't pass the states, but it passed the Congress. And as soon as it passed, she said, "All right, Alice. You're ready for your interview?" And Alice said yes.

So we had to get the money, but the grant proposal went through this peer review, and it went naturally to people who were studying suffrage, and those were the people who sent back word there was no sense passing [funding] this because those women will not be interviewed. [chuckles then pauses]

Morris: Isn't that interesting?

Baum: Yes.

Morris: So in that case, it was a man from Rockefeller who came to the rescue.

- Baum: Right, yes. You know what? I [had an appointment in New York with] the Rockefeller Foundation. We had another grant proposal, and their office was on top of a very high building. I don't know which one. I don't know where it was, but it was a very high building, and it was a very elegant building, and they were up at the top.
- Morris: Probably Rockefeller Center.
- Baum: Probably.
- Morris: Wow.
- Baum: And so I zipped up there on the elevator. Then when I got out and I looked out the window, my stomach turned. I was so afraid, I could hardly move.
- Morris: Oh, dear.
- Baum: I wasn't used to being up so high. [laughs] Ohhh! [laughs] After a while, I could get my heart to stop thumping and talk to people reasonably. But this fellow, Peter—he decided that he would not be a foundation grantor any more because it gave you a false picture of yourself, because you'd get to thinking you were like God, handing out money or passing on people's work or dreams or whatever, and that it was a kind of—he said he'd go to dinner with people and everybody was so nice to him and all, and he knew it was untrue. It was all based on the fact that he was the source of funding, and he didn't like that, so he resigned from Rockefeller and became a professor somewhere.
- Morris: Oh. That's lovely. You said his name was Peter?
- Baum: And I may even be mistaken on that. Of course, it's all in the files, and I don't know, but he was a youngish man.
- Morris: That's interesting. I've heard that from other foundation people.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: Exactly that same word. Cole [Colburn] Wilbur, who is now retired from the Packard Foundation, feels the same way.
- Baum: So when I went to the Rockefeller Foundation, I remember we had a great project in mind that failed, and it was to document San Francisco Bay.
- Morris: Like Save the Bay?
- Baum: No, more the economics and the politics of the shipping [industry] and how it went up into the hinterland, and I forget [all that was in the proposal]; we did

go to the Hearst Foundation. Anyway, wherever I went, they were kind of sweet to me, like, “Isn’t that cute? She’s got a little river out here.” [laughs]

Morris: Oh, dear.

Baum: I’d say, “You’ve got New York Bay. We’ve got San Francisco Bay, yes.” No, that wasn’t the same; we were a little local history society [laughs] going to document our old farmers.

Morris: Oh, dear. Oh, dear. Oh, dear.

Baum: That’s when I really got the picture beyond—

Morris: The view of the West from the tall towers of New York.

Baum: Yes. But we haven’t really gotten very far on the Warren project, and there isn’t very far I can get because, as I say, it was—

Morris: What you’re saying is that while the Warren project was under way, which was a big project, there were these other major projects—

Baum: Oh, always, always, always.

Morris: —so that the mechanics of managing and production got more and more complicated.

Baum: Yes. And then the mechanics, like the Warren project would have little offshoots, like—what was—

Morris: There was the black political leaders.

Baum: Black political leaders was an offshoot, yes, and the women political leaders. How was that funded? I forget that.

Morris: And I don’t know whether the Sierra Club counts as an offshoot—

Baum: No, no. It was going on, but it was not—

Morris: Ann Lage later went on and interviewed—you know, we interviewed conservation people both in the Warren project and the Pat Brown project.

[End tape 21, side A, begin side B]

- Baum: [Conservation was one of our] first projects and one of our longest projects, and I hope it's still going. I don't know though. Conservation was—well, that was where the forestry [project] started, too.
- Morris: The first interviews were with Sierra Club people?
- Baum: Yes. Yes, yes. We started with a Sierra Club project very early on, and that's how we got Ann Lage because she and Ray were chairmen of the Sierra Club history committee. I went to meet with them, and eventually we hired Ann. Their Sierra Club history committee was not a paid job. It was just a volunteer job. And Marshall Kuhn—he was something in the Sierra Club history committee—and he engineered that the Sierra Club papers would all come to the Bancroft Library.
- Morris: I'll bet that pleased Jim Hart.
- Baum: Probably, probably, because it was an old and respectable—[laughs]. Jim Hart. Well, politics wasn't Jim Hart—I mean, Jim Hart was really a literary man.
- Morris: There wasn't much literary in the political California history. I wrote down Irving Stone's name because it seemed to me that for a while, there used to be a lot about Irving Stone and ROHO.
- Baum: Yes, there was—
- Morris: Later on, the office interviewed Mrs. Stone.
- Baum: Yes. Well, I can remember meeting Irving Stone way before we did an interview with Mrs. Stone. Of course, Irving Stone had interviewed or written about some of the people that we were interviewing in his book.
- Morris: He was part of the university centennial history book, *There Was Light*. He wrote a chapter for that,—
- Baum: Yes, that's right.
- Morris: —which was going on at the same time.
- Baum: Oh, that's right, and Harriet worked on that, too. Anyway, we met Irving Stone—
- Morris: From the beginning of the Warren project, Walter Gordon was going to be interviewed.
- Baum: Yes.

- Morris: Because he played football with Warren.
- Baum: He would have been part of the Warren project, yes.
- Morris: Right. But then how did that turn into the black political leaders project? Did somebody offer some money?
- Baum: [pause] Was it black political leaders or black alumni?
- Morris: No, black alumni is later.
- Baum: That's later.
- Morris: That was in the eighties.
- Baum: Yes, yes. I remember the Walter Gordon interview. That was funny. We were going to do Walter Gordon, and things just didn't seem to work out. Let me look it up. There's a whole Gordon project, I think, of his—
- Morris: Right.
- Baum: He never had time or we knew something was wrong.
- Morris: We knew there was something wrong?
- Baum: Yes. Joyce Henderson was going to interview him. Let's see [consulting catalogue] —Walter Gordon Oral History project—a whole lot of people were interviewed from 1976 to '79, by Amelia Fry, Anne Brower, and Edward Ferris. I don't remember who Edward Ferris is. They must have been short interviews. Yes, they were just short interviews, because some of those people—we interviewed long, full interviews with them, but not as part of that.
- Well, anyway, we sent Joyce Henderson, our black interviewer, to interview Walter Gordon, and things just didn't seem to go. He didn't have time. And finally it occurred to us that Walter Gordon did not wish to be interviewed as a black man; he wished to be interviewed as a colleague of Earl Warren's.
- Isn't that interesting? And he never said that, so I may be just imagining it. So, okay, Amelia Fry would interview him, who was head of the Warren project, and that worked out. Walter Gordon came into our office [in 1971], the back office there, where Chita was sitting. He was going to be interviewed there, I guess.
- Morris: I remember meeting him at that point and thinking how strikingly he resembled Earl Warren.

- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: They were physically the same type and the same build, and they moved the same way.
- Baum: Yes, that's right.
- Morris: It's kind of like they were both big old football players.
- Baum: So Walter Gordon and Chita were in the back room there, interviewing, and we closed the door so that they wouldn't hear a lot of noise. Well, lo and behold, the door locked. [laughs]
- Morris: Oh, dear. That never happened before.
- Baum: No. The door was locked, and Chita and Walter Gordon couldn't get out. [laughs] I forget how we got them out. Oh, I guess we must have gotten the janitor eventually.
- Morris: Called up on the phone.
- Baum: [laughs]
- Morris: That's amazing.
- Baum: So we thought, what a way to start out. Walter Gordon was a quite distinguished fellow—[laughs]
- Morris: And one of the major figures in the Warren administration.
- Baum: Right.
- Morris: Oh, dear.
- Baum: [laughs] It wasn't that good an interview because it was too late in his life, I think. Well, let's see, it says he died in 1971, and he was interviewed in 1971, so—
- Morris: That's too bad. That's one of those actuarial imperatives that Chita mentions.
- Baum: Yes, that's too bad, yes.
- Morris: Do you want to say anything about Merrell F. ("Pop") Small, who seems to have been fascinated with the project?
- Baum: Pop Small. He was our guiding—we've had a lot of guiding stars. Pop Small was interviewed in 1970 and '71 by Amelia Fry and Gabrielle Morris, and so he must have been one of the first really long interviews. Let's see, 215 pages.

- Morris: He'd been Warren's traveling secretary, so he'd been on the spot while a lot of things were going on.
- Baum: Yes. Warren's departmental secretary, is what we called him. And he really was helpful. He came up with all kinds of information about everybody who'd been in Earl Warren's sphere. He had contact with all of them. He had had. He had opinions; he knew what was going on; he knew where they were, because we kept hearing, "Well, too bad you didn't get So-and-so; he was a real operator in the Warren gubernatorial time. But he died." And then you'd talk to Pop, and [he would say], "No, he's not dead. He's up in the gold country. He's retired, and he and his wife are happy." So Pop got us—
- Let me see. He told us why they called it Pop. It was because he had a lot of children or something.
- Morris: Yes, this goes back to his days as—
- Baum: Journalist.
- Morris: —editor of the Quincy newspaper.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: And his buddies in the Chamber of Commerce called him Pop because he had so many kids.
- Baum: Yes. He looked very much like Earl Warren. The two of them, if you saw them standing together, you wouldn't know which one was Pop Small and which one was Earl Warren. They were so similar.
- Morris: Except that Pop wasn't as tall as Warren.
- Baum: Was that true?
- Morris: Yes, Warren and Gordon were the same height, and Pop was more like around your height and my height, and Warren was up to six feet.
- Baum: I have the picture that was always in our office of Pop and Warren.
- Morris: That was a nice picture.
- Baum: Oh, the two of them together. It was lovely. And Pop wrote to Chita at least once a week, I think. Very funny letters. [telephone rings]
- Morris: Do you need to answer that?
- Baum: Let's just let it ring.

Morris: Okay. [telephone rings]

Baum: Since I'm nailed down here. And Pop sent us so many things—

[Recording interruption]

Baum: Merrell F. Small. Nobody called him that. They all called him Pop, I think. Wrote out lots of information for Chita: funny things and all sorts of things that are in his letters. Of course, she kept a file of all his letters, and I always hoped—I'm sure they're in the Bancroft Library, I hope, from our records.

Morris: I remember there was a whole apple-box-sized carton of items. It may depend on whether or not they went down before Estelle [Rebec] retired. I believe that she cleaned out a lot of things that we thought were pure gold and she thought was useless ephemera. We had a collection of campaign buttons and little goodies like that, tickets to the national conventions—

Baum: Oh, but those are three dimensional. Well, yes, yes.

Morris: You know, whatever.

Baum: Yes. And you used them for exhibits.

Morris: Yes, [here in the library and also in the State Capitol] Then some years later, we went to get them for another exhibit, and they were not to be found. Whoever was speaking to us said, "Well, Estelle Rebec didn't think those were appropriate [for the Bancroft Library], and she threw them out." So you wonder about letters to Chita from Pop Small.

Baum: I hope they're there, and I hope that researchers find them because there is much, much information in his letters that is not in the oral histories. If you'd interviewed Pop for a thousand pages, you couldn't find out all he knew.

Morris: Yes. Yes. Do you want to talk more about the specific interviewing and production process, or would you like to talk about the adventures of seeking funding from the legislature and evolving into the Pat Brown and the Ronald Reagan?

Baum: To tell you the truth, I wouldn't like to do any of those; I'd like to quit.

Morris: Okay.

Baum: Do you think that's all right?

- Morris: That's fine. You want to quit for today or you want to quit altogether?
- Baum: No, I'll quit for today.
- Morris: Okay.
- Baum: It's been fun, but I'm running out of gas.
- Morris: That's fine. It's a good place to stop.
- Baum: Yes. Now, let's see, that whole thing about what became of—what did we call it?—state—
- Morris: State government history.
- Baum: Yes, that was a whole story. I kind of forgot. That's a whole long, bitter battle with our colleagues in southern California.
- Morris: [cross-talk; unintelligible]. Yes. Well, the whole business of having set up the Warren project and completed this huge body of work, we kept finding loose ends. You started to interview somebody, and they then went on into the next administration.
- Okay, we can stop today and ruminate on the strategies of—
- Baum: Bringing in money. I can't even remember what our funding was right now.

[End audiofile 21, end of session]

Interview with Willa Baum
 Interviewed by Gabrielle Morris
 Interview 13: July 6, 2005
 [Begin audiofile 22 (tape 22, side A)]

Morris: July 6th, 2005. Going to talk to Willa about the Earl Warren project, its beginnings and follow-ups.

[initial irrelevant conversation deleted]

Morris: I was reading over the notes on your interview with Lee [Swent], and she asked you which colloquium you didn't go to. I thought you'd been to every one. And I guess you must have said to her that you missed one somewhere?

Baum: It would have been 1972; it was when my daughter [Anya] was born. It was an advance pregnancy absence. [laughs]

Morris: Yes, but you got a full report from Chita.

Baum: I presume.

Morris: So it wasn't that you were mad at the OHA.

Baum: Oh, no, I just could not walk very well. [laughs] Since I tried to be—at the OHA, I was strictly professional, I didn't think I needed to drag my family situation into—[laughs]

Morris: Being preceded by the next child, yes.

Baum: Because the first—now, that's funny, how that works out. The first colloquium I went to, the first colloquium, which was at Big Bear—it must have been in 1966 because I know my son, Noah, had been fairly recently born, and so I was still a nursing mother. And that happened twice.

Morris: Did you take Noah to the colloquium?

Baum: No. No, no. No, I don't—I forget what I did.

The one which would have been the one I missed, must have been 1972, and then that very next year [the colloquium] which would have been October, was [in] Texas. I was still a nursing mother, and that was just miserable. [laughs]

- Morris: It's very painful, yes. I seem to recall that when Anya was born, you went to Kaiser in the morning, and that afternoon you called in to ROHO to make sure that we hadn't forgotten to do something or other.
- Baum: Oh, that might have been, because I know I always said when they said, "What are your hobbies?" I said my hobbies were children; my job was oral history, but my hobbies were children. [laughs]
- Morris: It's a good thing to have something to balance your life.
- Baum: Oh, I've always thought so. No, nobody should have to have their whole life tied up in the one situation because if something goes wrong there, you're just really shattered, while if you've got another life—
- Morris: Yes. We're supposed to go back today to the evolution of the state government history project from Earl Warren into the later governors, but I didn't want to go past the time when Earl Warren, himself, came to our office [in 1971.] Do you remember that, with Warren Olney?
- Baum: Yes, yes, yes. Warren Olney and the fellow who was his editor, very nice guy. He was so helpful.
- Morris: Yes, and his wife ran a string of preschools.
- Baum: That, I don't know.
- Morris: Yes, the Claremont Day Nursery, on the south side of town.
- Baum: I ran into him when I went to some event at the gym at Cal, the big gym, and I met him there, and I was so happy to see him. It was years later.
- Morris: Had he helped organize that luncheon we had for Mr. Warren?
- Baum: Yes. Oh, yes, he had.
- Morris: Am I right? He was trying to encourage Warren to get on with writing his own autobiography.
- Baum: Yes, he was—I forget what the publishing company was [Doubleday & Co.], and he was their West Coast editor. He was also a friend of Earl Warren's. He had been a friend.
- Morris: How did he get to be?
- Baum: I don't know that.
- Morris: Because he was more our age than Warren's age.

- Baum: Yes, but it might have been through Cal sports or something. I don't know if Earl Warren was especially interested in sports, but it was through Berkeley, I'm sure. Anyway—oh, why can't I remember his name? Yes, he was working with Earl Warren on Earl Warren's autobiography, which Earl Warren was doing for the publishing company, and I don't know what they were doing together, but he was the man here, and he was the man who arranged everything. I mean, he had connections; he could get cars, he could get things together. What he couldn't get was—
- Morris: A manuscript.
- Baum: No, a courtroom reporter. [laughs]
- Morris: To follow Warren around?
- Baum: No, Warren didn't believe in tape recordings, and though he was willing to talk to us, he wanted it recorded by a courtroom reporter.
- Morris: Oh, oh, I see.
- Baum: And we didn't know how to get a courtroom reporter, but it certainly was not in our budget. I think our budget at that time was about \$10,000 total. The courtroom reporter was—[laughs]
- Morris: So how did you finally get him to—
- Baum: Finally Warren gave up and decided we could have a tape recorder. I can't remember how he did that, because he was adamant for several years. He absolutely would not have a tape recorder. No, he wanted a regular reporter sitting there.
- Morris: That costs money.
- Baum: Oh, yes.
- Morris: Skilled labor.
- Baum: The interview we did with Earl Warren was not a real interview. We considered it--
- Morris: The one we did here at Berkeley?
- Baum: Here in Berkeley, yes, the only one we did, I think. It was on that famous day.
- Morris: Chita did interview him in Washington.
- Baum: Did she? I didn't remember that.

- Morris: That was later [1972]. Yes, the project went on for a long time—
- Baum: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. But he didn't do his own oral history.
- Morris: There's a volume called *Conversations with Earl Warren on California Government* [1982].
- Baum: And that was the thing we did, and it took all day, in our little office, and it was what we used to call a skeletal interview. The word "skeletal" meant it was a warm-up, sort of, and we'd talk with our interviewee and we'd record it, but it was not meant to be used in the oral history; it was just to talk about the things they wanted to talk about, so we could plan the interview. That was what Earl Warren agreed to do because we would not do his real oral history until he had finished his autobiography.
- Morris: Ah.
- Baum: But we said, "We're interviewing all these different people who worked with your administration, and we'd like to know what you thought, what were the big issues that we should ask about. We can't ask about everything, and so we want to know what the big issues of your administration were." So that's when he agreed to come to our office with Warren Olney and the editor.
- Morris: What was the significance of Warren Olney?
- Baum: Oh, Warren Olney had been Earl Warren's sidekick here when he was city attorney. I hope that's true. I think that's true. And then district attorney, and then attorney general for the state, and I don't know what Warren Olney did when he was governor, but he must have been—
- Morris: Didn't Warren Olney go on into court administration?
- Baum: When Earl Warren was taken to the Supreme Court, he took Warren Olney with him and put Warren Olney in charge of the administrative aspects of the Supreme Court, so Warren Olney was always with him, and they were very good friends, and they could back each other up on what they said, and so that's what makes the conversations good. I mean, they're back and forth, Earl Warren and Warren Olney. I mean, it was fun. You were there, weren't you? Weren't you one of the questioners?
- Morris: Yes, and we had two tape recorders. We used those big old Tandbergs [reel-to-reel recorders].
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: And then we had a smaller one in case—

- Baum: Yes, we didn't want to miss a thing.
- Morris: In case there was a glitch with one of them.
- Baum: Yes. And each interviewer on the Earl Warren project was there to ask questions about their field, their specific thing they were working on. I don't know, what was your assignment?
- Morris: Health insurance.
- Baum: Health insurance.
- Morris: I remember that when we finished the set of interviews on the state health insurance legislation [in the 1940s] that didn't get passed, I sent the interview history to the chief justice, and to my great surprise, he fired back in very short order, pointing out several errors of my work and adding some very useful information.
- Baum: Oh. Wow. Oh.
- Morris: So he in that case took an editorial interest. We were also that day trying to ferret out his inner thoughts on the Japanese-American relocation [during World War II.]
- Baum: Yes. Yes. Well, after we had that all morning going, with all these different people firing questions at him, in good order; we were very polite, and we marched over to the men's faculty club and had lunch and continued, with the tape recorder going, to discuss—
- Morris: Didn't we have wine with lunch?
- Baum: Do you remember that? Oh, I don't remember that. I don't remember that. We focused—
- Morris: Maybe we didn't tell you.
- Baum: We focused on different things. [laughs]
- Morris: There was a thought that we should have wine with lunch because that would relax the gentlemen, and then they would talk more freely about relocation and some of the other touchy issues of the administration. I think the feeling was that they got so relaxed that they got giggly and weren't as informative in the afternoon as they were in the morning.
- Baum: I don't remember any of that. I do remember that the waitress wore clogs, wooden clogs, and so throughout the whole tape recording, there was "clomp,

clomp, clomp, clomp” as she picked up plates. [laughs] But, you know, the text of what they talked about—I don’t remember that.

Morris: I think you’re right: we were all pursuing the questions that we had not gotten answers to or that we were wondering about asking in a different—

Baum: The different people that were going to talk to, yes.

Morris: They by and large said, “Oh, yes” to everybody that was on the list that Chita had put together, of people to be interviewed.

Baum: Oh, to say they were a significant person, yes.

Morris: But we were also working on an extensive interview with Warren Olney.

Baum: Oh, yes.

Morris: And it seemed as if that luncheon sort of established us as credible people, and they paid more attention to what we were doing thereafter.

Baum: Warren Olney was very helpful.

Morris: Yes, yes. Eventually we ran out of NEH funding. They gave up on renewing our grant. Do you recall how we came to go to the state legislature and eventually get—

Baum: We were trying to get—and I’m sure, because we were working the Warren project for years, trying to finish it up, and we never did get Earl Warren, a real genuine oral history, where we sat down with him. I just don’t believe Chita did him in Washington, but she might have done Mrs. Warren.

Morris: There was a short interview with Mrs. Warren, who was of her time. She was not very much involved in the government side; it was more running the house—

Baum: Yes, yes.

Morris: —and the children.

Baum: Yes. I don’t think we’ve ever heard about the chief justice’s spouses, have we? Historically? I bet you don’t know a thing about any chief justice’s spouse.

Morris: Every now and then, I think about her. I have never seen an obituary. She was living in the hotel in Washington that she and the chief justice had lived in, and as far as [I know], she may still be there.

- Baum: Goodness, it seems impossible. [laughs] But I don't know.
- Morris: Right, right.
- Baum: Yes. So I don't remember, but I do know we were trying to get money from somewhere in the state because we'd exhausted all the sources that we had, private sources, almost, because the NEH grants had been matching, and so we had gotten everybody that we could for matching money, and so we still weren't finished. I know it was dicey to talk to anybody in the state government because the university had a hands-off—they had a man up there in Sacramento, who represented the university, and you were not supposed to go up there except to talk to their man, the university's man, so we were on thin ice from here and there. But we got it to—it was the secretary of state. Not the secretary of state, the—
- Morris: I think by then we'd already started interviewing some of the legislative leaders and making friends with the legislative leaders. Didn't they suggest that we put in a request to the legislature, itself?
- Baum: Yes, I think that's the way it went.
- Morris: Outside of the UC budget.
- Baum: Yes, it was something like that.
- Morris: Yes, somebody in the legislative analyst's office.
- Baum: The legislative analyst. That's the man you worked with, the one who painted.
- Morris: [A.] Alan Post.
- Baum: Alan Post. Alan Post, I think, was helpful in all that.
- Morris: Yes, he continued to be a great source of support, and I think we did three or four different interviews with him, in each successive administration.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: And Jim [James R.] Mills, who was the speaker of the state senate, came up with that wonderful line about the legislature needed an institutional memory, and oral history would be the memory.
- Baum: I know it was just going along fine, and we were small, a little blob of money compared to anything they did, and I don't think we were in any trouble with the university, which we always could be.

- Morris: The first round was we were looking for, as you say, a small blob of money, like \$50,000, to finish the Warren project.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: Do you remember who first mentioned the thought that there was all this wonderful material in state government started; shouldn't it continue on, to document the Goodwin Knight and Pat Brown era?
- Baum: I don't remember that, Gaby. I do know it's a thought that anyone would have [laughs], from one governor to the next.
- Morris: Right. Had you and Chita talked about that?
- Baum: I'm sure we had. We talked all the time. But I cannot remember that. It's long ago, and we spent lots of time in the office, and sometimes we'd go out to dinner and plot and think what we could do, yes. We were so interested in the people that continued on as legislators, and the issues that had been opened up in the Warren project. Just to drop them dead when Earl Warren left the governorship was foolish.
- In fact, we didn't. We continued talking to them. We didn't say, "All right, Mr. State Senator, now you stop talking because the governor has left." We didn't do that, but we didn't really pursue them actively after. And so it was just clear that you had to go on. Well, all I know is that we were doing fine with the state legislature; we were inconspicuous. We were interviewing state officials.
- Morris: I remember Goodwin Knight was gone, but Pat Brown was so enthusiastic about his own role in history that he must have been a big help in getting people to talk to us.
- Baum: I'm sure he was. Oh, he was very enthusiastic, and he was a big help, too. As I think of all our projects, we always had some outsiders that were just tremendous help. I can't think of the dates or anything, when we hit the fan with—
- Morris: I remember an assemblyman named Frank [Lanterman], who was an old warhorse from Southern California. The big issue was mental health, and he used to lecture me that—he was addressing the university, [even though] he was talking to me, saying that "you people come up here all the time, asking for money, but nobody ever asks us to come down to look to the university and to meet all these famous people that you're always going on about, your Nobel Prize winners and things like that."

I thought that was a very interesting observation. I imagine he said it to the UC man in Sacramento, but I don't think he ever got to come down and tour the campus.

Baum: That's ridiculous, isn't it? Yes, I remember he was very active in mental health, wasn't he?

Morris: And at one point Dr. Hart got Pat Brown to come and be the guest speaker at a Bancroft annual meeting.

Baum: I don't remember that.

Morris: I remember it because I was detailed to go pick up Pat Brown in San Francisco and bring him over to the banquet, but there was some big meeting at the Moscone Convention Center, and I had to abandon the car and go find him in this big convention center and say, "It's time to go to the Bancroft meeting."

And he says, "Oh, yes, yes." But as we came back through this big convention hall, every group of people, he stopped and said hello and said, "Hi, I'm Pat Brown. I'm the governor of California."

Baum: [laughs]

Morris: He just had the best time greeting everybody.

Baum: I don't remember him giving a talk for the Friends of the Bancroft Library. Is that what you're saying?

Morris: Yes, the spring annual meeting.

Baum: I do remember when Pat Brown—when we gathered all the people from the Warren project. We called it finished, and we had a big party in the Bancroft Library to celebrate the end. And Pat and his wife were there.

Morris: Was that the one where we invited all the still-surviving interviewees?

Baum: Yes.

Morris: Those were wonderful parties.

Baum: Oh, people should do that a lot, because a lot of those people hadn't seen each other since the end of their service, and it was just great for them to do that. It was great for them; it was great for us; it was great for Pat Brown. Golly, he was happy.

Morris: Was that difficult to convince Bancroft to put on a party like that?

- Baum: No, I don't think so.
- Morris: I made a little list of other people who came to the office. Did we talk about Anne Brower?
- Baum: Oh, well, let's see. No, we're not doing the government thing yet, are we?
- Morris: Yes, Anne came to do production and editing, but she also did a few interviews for the Reagan project.
- Baum: Yes. Anne Brower. I can't remember why we knew her.
- Morris: She'd worked for the UC Press.
- Baum: Yes, but we didn't know the UC Press. But I do know she came into the office and worked for a while, and then it became hard for her to work, and the reason was because of her monkey. [laughs] They had a monkey that the Browsers really loved, that took a lot of attention, and let's see, the monkey had a dog.
- Morris: The monkey had a dog.
- Baum: They had a dog, but the dog was the monkey's friend and also heater, because the monkey and the dog would sit together. The monkey needed a heater because he was cold. [laughs] I forget. Something happened to the dog, and the monkey was desperate, and Anne had to stay home a lot. She couldn't come in because of the monkey. Oh, dear.
- Morris: And Eleanor Glaser also came in in the mid-seventies.
- Baum: And she came in to do Jewish history. Again, I don't remember how I met her, but she was perfect for the Jewish project. We were interviewing prominent Jewish leaders. The Jewish community was often divided—

[End tape 22, side A, begin side B]

[Phrase not recorded when tape turned]

- Baum: I don't know what the issues were, but I know that if you had an interviewer, they had to be outside of anything local because [otherwise] they would be seen as representative of the other side by somebody.
- Morris: Oh, dear.

- Baum: So we had had—let’s see, I think Ruth [Teiser] did a couple, and she was from Portland.
- Morris: I remember Malca doing some distinguished rabbi at great length.
- Baum: Yes, yes, Malca did Rabbi Edgar Magnin, but Eleanor was perfect because she came from the Midwest. She and her husband were very active in Jewish affairs in the East Bay, and mostly this project was in San Francisco. So Eleanor was perfect for the interviewer on this project.
- I always thought that’s a question that often we haven’t discussed in oral history meetings, that if you get anybody who is knowledgeable or a member of some group—like, every group: I’m thinking the Chinese—wow!—they are split, in many cases—I mean, they have little sides that they’re fighting about that you don’t know what it’s about, but you do know that the people that are local are going to be seen as a member of one or another [faction.]
- Morris: Did that actually foul up some interviews or cause some interviews not to be done?
- Baum: No, it wouldn’t be causing them not to be done, it would be causing them not to be funded.
- Morris: Right, so they wouldn’t happen if someone didn’t like the interviewer.
- Baum: No, I don’t think it did. And you never knew which—I mean, all these things, somebody would come and say, “You know, you can’t use So-and-so for—these people won’t talk to that person.” Well, it’s all subterranean.
- Morris: Do you think that’s still an issue in oral history?
- Baum: Oh, of course.
- Morris: The interviewee population has not gotten more sophisticated.
- Baum: Of course not, and the smaller your group—like, you think you can go out in the country or somewhere in a little Portuguese community or something and interview them, that’s where it’ll be really serious. [laughs]
- Interviewing famous people, like governors and all—they’re public, but it’s the sort of small groups that are so hard to get an interviewer that can be part of the team. They have to be in the inside enough to do the interviews and be acceptable.
- Morris: Right, and to know what the questions should be.
- Baum: Well, and to be acceptable, yes. It’s a delicate dance.

But anyway, Eleanor Glaser, and that's a project—she eventually—We were just doing one or two interviews at first and they were for the Magnes Museum, but they weren't really. I mean we developed the interview, but we wanted it to go through the Magnes Museum, and so the people who donated gave the money to the Magnes Museum, and they commissioned us to do the interviews. Now, that was all arranged through our office.

I wanted to encourage the Magnes Museum—and I wanted them to have a really historical function, which they certainly have had, so it was a pleasure to work with them. And we did work with some other groups the same way: We arranged everything, but the funding came through some other group.

Let's see. Oh, the main one—gee, is this going to jump around. This is "Conversations with Gaby and Willa."

Morris: No, it's relevant.

Baum: Let's see. Oh, we wanted to interview a number of persons in San Francisco. I can't even remember who all of them were. And we were working with the [James] Irvine Foundation. The Irvine Foundation was interested in having these people interviewed, and they were community leaders, and I think primarily Catholic.

Morris: Oh, really?

Baum: That wasn't part of the name of the project, but they were community leaders, but they did happen to be Catholic, and it was very good to get it because we were getting Jewish, as well as other people. We had very few Catholics. Oh, well, of course Pat Brown was a Catholic, but [his interview] had nothing to do with Catholicism.

Morris: I remember [Daniel J.] Dan Koshland saying that the Jewish community was doing its part—

Baum: Why didn't the others do theirs?

Morris: But they expected other groups to equally participate.

Baum: The Irvine Foundation, and it was the head of the Irvine Foundation, a lady—they could not give us any money because we were a state-supported institution, and so, very cleverly—and I don't remember who came up with this; I'd like to think I did, but I don't know if that's true—we worked with the California—no, it wasn't the California Historical Society. It's what you can join if your ancestors were here before 1849. It was a big association. They had a wonderful building kind of near the opera house.

Morris: [The Society of] California Pioneers.

- Baum: Yes, yes, okay. So the Irvine Foundation gave them money to document the civic leaders, and they commissioned us to do it.
- Morris: Very nice.
- Baum: Yes. I don't know if we did that with some others. That worked out very well because the university was always worried that people we interviewed or dealt with, who might be big donors to the university—they were afraid that they might donate a small amount of money to ROHO, and then they wouldn't donate millions of dollars to the university, so we were not to touch them, and so we always had a hard time asking for money from any prominent donor or foundation or whatever, because the university was worried. But if we could go through the California Pioneers, that had nothing to do with the university; they just commissioned this as a contract, sort of, to interview.
- We were joint owners. We always worked it out that we were joint owners of the completed interview, like the Magnes Museum, they have publication rights. We jointly can allow people to quote and so forth. And usually they turned that job over to us, because nobody had a librarian in their office that could check the interviews and be sure they were correct and give people permissions.
- Morris: Did something like the governors project increase the number of requests that ROHO got for publication, and make the work more visible as a whole, do you think?
- Baum: No, I'm not sure of that. Our interviews were heavily used, and they were the Earl Warren project and then the water project, which was, I guess, an arm of the Earl Warren.
- Morris: Yes, it's one of the government issues that sort of took on a life of its own.
- Baum: Yes. And that was heavily quoted. I mean, books came out that were just almost 80 percent based on the oral histories.
- Morris: Wow.
- Baum: Oh, I'm overemphasizing, because the persons who wrote them had to do tremendous work, but the oral histories were on every page. But I don't know if that increased attention to the Oral History Office. Who reads the footnotes? The [transcripts] were much used in published books that everybody was reading.
- Morris: We got some good coverage in the *Sacramento Bee*—remember, they did a big spread, and Chita published a couple of things in the U.S. Supreme Court journal.

- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: And the *Los Angeles Times*, when we got onto the Reagan project, did a big newspaper article. You wonder if that builds up an awareness so that people writing books come to ROHO looking for more material. There's another person from the *Los Angeles Times* is writing a biography of Earl Warren, as we speak. He's reading all those ancient volumes now.
- Baum: Oh, really?
- Morris: Yes, so I'll be interested to see what he says. It's been a while since [G.] Edward White's book on Warren, so I'll be interested to see how ideas change or what the view of Warren is.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: So the material keeps on being used.
- Baum: Oh, definitely. We tried to emphasize that the materials were being used. Mostly that was to educate the university, because the university was never much interested in the projects, and the Bancroft Library wasn't, either. Now they are, but they were not. Dr. Hart was a manuscript man and a literary man, and if it wasn't on an old piece of paper or a book, it was not very interesting.
- Morris: He was the person who sent the first researcher out to interview a notable person. True, it was a literary person—[Alice B. Toklas, interviewed in 1952]
- Baum: That's right, yes. Oh, he wasn't clear off us. But when it comes to—the Bancroft Library did have some money from endowments or things like that, that money never went to oral history, never. They didn't consider it. It had to go for buying rare books or manuscripts. And I kept saying, "These are rare books. These are really rare books. They aren't going to exist if you don't fund them." [laughs]
- No, the Bancroft Library as a whole—they considered us sort of offbeat and allowable but not really part of the team.
- Morris: Before we finish on the governors, did going on into planning a project on the Reagan governor years cause any flap in library circles or anything like that?
- Baum: I don't remember that. I do remember the big flap was when Enid [H.] Douglass, who was head of the Claremont College oral history project—she got all upset that we were getting money from the legislature. Claremont College is a private college, and they have always been angry that the state assisted some higher education institutions and not others and that it was unfair. I think they'd been after the legislature on various issues. But when they saw that we were getting money for the oral history and they weren't, oh,

I think Enid [went to her assemblyman]—dragging along with her was, but not very interested, was Dale Treleven [from UCLA], because he wanted in on it—

Morris: It was before Dale got there. The guy that went to Columbia was at UCLA for a couple of years before Dale.

Baum: Oh, yes. I could see these people. I could tell you how they walk, how they talk, but I can't—[laughs] Grele, Ron Grele.

Morris: Yes, it was when Ron [Ronald J.] Grele was there.

Baum: Because it wasn't Jim Mink.

Morris: It was not Jim Mink. And am I right that it was a surprise when Ron Grele came to head the UCLA oral history office?

Baum: Oh, definitely. Oh, yes. And Ron Grele—his whole life was in New York, and UCLA was disappointed when he left in a couple of years. They need somebody who stays for a while, but Ron was obviously trying to get back to New York.

Morris: I understand that UCLA never asked him to sign a contract.

Baum: Is that right?

Morris: Yes.

Baum: Oh.

Morris: They may have thought they had a gentlemen's agreement, but—

Baum: We never signed contracts. I never signed. Who signs a contract? An employee doesn't sign a contract.

Morris: Nowadays they do.

Baum: Well, maybe some.

Morris: I've heard that Ron felt that he was not bound to UCLA because there was no contract.

Baum: Oh, well, that's a good excuse. [laughs] I never heard of a contract for anybody except a top city manager or a police chief. Most of us, we just get hired month by month, and then we develop tenure or something, sort of, that—anyhow—

- Morris: Yes, anyhow, there was UCLA and Claremont.
- Baum: It was Claremont, Claremont.
- Morris: And Fullerton.
- Baum: They never really took very much part in that. Oh, yes, Fullerton did a few interviews on that, but not much.
- Morris: Right. I think everybody's attitude changes when money is being discussed and the possibility of their being some money available.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: Most oral history offices are fairly skimpily funded.
- Baum: Right, yes. Anyway, to solve that, they decided they'd set up an oral history fund, which would be divided between—and it could be different groups, but it was ROHO and UC Davis, and UCLA and Claremont and Fullerton. Isn't that the only ones? It wasn't a pot of money that any little historical society could put in a bid [for].
- Morris: Cal State, if I remember right, also ended up—
- Baum: Cal State Sacramento entered—yes, but at the beginning they didn't, I don't think. Maybe they did.
- Morris: Again, my recollection is that when the thought of some continuing state funding arose, interest in the project appeared from various sources, including Cal State Sacramento.
- Baum: Yes, yes.
- Morris: They were in the process of setting up a California study center.
- Baum: They really didn't have an oral history project. They were sort of getting it going. They produced one, yes, yes. UC Davis had a little oral history [project] run by one man. When he died, that was the end of their oral history project, and they never managed to get it going again. They did just one interview.
- But anyway, we had meetings. We'd go to Sacramento, a representative or two from every one of those organizations, and we'd talk about what subjects were to be interviewed and what kind of questions we'd ask, but most of our meetings and agitation was about the format: how it was to be printed up, and the archives, the state archives, set up the format.

- Morris: Was it not Sherry [B.] Jeffe [pronounced JEFF-ee] who was interested in format when she became the adviser to the state archives?
- Baum: No, she wasn't interested in format, she was interested in subjects. Sherry Jeffe was—no, it was somebody from the state archives.
- Morris: I believe she was the one who wrote the manual on format for the archives. Later, we decided the game wasn't worth the candle; we said we didn't want the money and we didn't want to participate. At which point the state archives took over the management and hired Sherry Jeffe to run it.
- Baum: Oh, well, that was far down the road. I can't remember all that.
- Morris: It happened in a two-year period. She had been running Jess Unruh's legislative oral history program, which was affiliated with the university of Southern California political science department. So when more money became available, it seems as if more people became interested in oral history.
- Baum: Yes. They had set up a special format, and it was down to periods and commas, what you could use. They didn't want interview histories except a little—it was just so controlled, and the main thing they cared about was not the content but all of them, were they exactly the same by page, what the page was like and so on. To do the paging and the this and that—oh, they even wanted it one and a half spaces apart for the type, not one or not two, but one and a half, which our computers couldn't do. [laughs]
- Morris: Oh, dear.
- Baum: We had a terrible time. But it was the format that drove us mad. Our processing department was—and the poor interviewers, trying to get all these editorial little things done.
- Morris: And wasn't there something about the legal citations, that we would have gone down the drain if we hadn't had Germaine LaBerge?
- Baum: Who was a lawyer.
- Morris: Yes, a gifted legal researcher.
- Baum: I don't remember that, either.
- Morris: How had Germaine and ROHO come in contact?
- Baum: [Makes clicking noises.] I can't remember at all. I remember when we hired her that we did interview her. She must have applied for something. And she was a licensed lawyer.

- Morris: Yes. Read law with the man who later became her husband.
- Baum: Yes, she passed the bar by the old-fashioned way of reading law with an attorney. Well, that was a good find to get Germaine. She must have come in by herself. I don't think anybody brought her in.
- Morris: Sally? Sally Hughes?
- Baum: Oh, Sally. Sally Hughes was already a Ph.D. in some biological science. She had already been hired by the Bancroft Library to do something.
- Morris: To succeed the guy that was doing the history of science project interviews?
- Baum: No, no, that was Arthur [L.] Norberg. He was succeeded by Robin somebody [Rider], who was head of the history of science division. They did do some interviews, but it was mostly to collect manuscripts and so on for the Bancroft Library in the field of science. Sally had worked for Robin, and Sally had also worked at San Francisco, UC San Francisco, on some research things, which may have included—oh, I don't remember; it wasn't just interviews, but I think primarily she was doing interviews. They were not very big projects.
- Morris: The first thing I remember her working on was the history of AIDS and the San Francisco medical school's response to treatment and education.
- Baum: Yes. I know for some years, she was part time at UC San Francisco, and part time with us, and it was a real hassle employment-wise. [laughs] At UC San Francisco, she could be a principal investigator, and that means that she could get grants. At UC Berkeley, she could not be a principal investigator because you had to be on the faculty. It was a rule.
- Always, when we got a grant, if we got a grant, it had to come through a professor. Anyhow, so Sally could get her own grants, but she couldn't do it through UC Berkeley, so she would get them through UC San Francisco, and then somehow we juggled the funds back and forth. To get the funds from one place to another, to get Sally's hours from one place to the other—she had different—what she was called; I guess she was an editor for ROHO, but she was something else—
- Morris: Principal investigator?
- Baum: No, no, that's not a job description. A researcher or something. So I don't know, but she did better at UC San Francisco. Everything was better except that the people she worked with were dreadful. You couldn't function. And she could do wonderful work for ROHO, so eventually she shifted over to us, totally, in her employment.

Morris: It was amazing that she was on hand and they were ready to do a project on AIDS. That has been a fairly—

[End audiofile 22, begin audiofile 23, tape 23]

[Brief unrelated comments not recorded as tape is turned over]

Baum: The AIDS project came about—oh, yes, that's a long tale. It came about through David and—the guy who gave us the money, David and Evelyne Lennette, and that whole project—and Sally was on our staff, but slightly, I think—boy, is this running around. If you had to draw strings between what's connected to what—

Morris: It would be a picture of a wonderful atomic—

Baum: Yes. David Lennette and his wife, Evelyne, who were microbiologists or something—they ran their own laboratory in Berkeley, which was called [Virolab]. Anyway, David and Evelyne came in, and he said his father, Edwin Lennette, was a very famous man—oh, Gaby, this is—he was a public health director, and he, David, wanted his father interviewed.

Morris: And the Lennettes just walked in the door?

Baum: They walked in the door.

Morris: How wonderful.

Baum: And Sally did it, and Dr. Lennette—oh, he had a fascinating, long story, and Sally worked on it. Took a real expert to deal with it. And so we finished that, and then they funded another person who'd worked with Dr. Lennette, Harald [Norlin] Johnson, also public health. That was a long interview. And somewhere in there, we got into irises.

Morris: Irises as in eyes?

Baum: No, irises as in flowers. The Lennettes were very interested in irises, which are a plant that can be cross-bred, and you can develop all kinds of things. It's really a genetic whole mapping of what can be done. So we did a whole series of irises interviews.

Morris: Really?

Baum: Yes. See, there's things going on that nobody knows about. In the office, they didn't know. But that was fun. We had lovely presentations. We'd go out to

some plant association and have a big presentation. Met some marvelous people. And eventually that took off as a horticultural series that Suzanne did.

But then Evelyne Lennette had been one of the first [ones doing] research to—they brought in things to try and see—when they were trying to figure out what AIDS was, they brought in specimens or things. Evelyne had been [in] on the first development, when they figured out it was a virus and stuff. So she and David Lennette were very interested in the AIDS [epidemic]. They funded that whole project; I'm sure they and Sally planned it, and they said they'd fund it.

Morris: Amazing.

Baum: It is. It was terrific. And not only did it include all the people who'd been active in the Bay Area on developing a system on what was AIDS, but also then how to deal with it.

Morris: Were the Lennettes attached to UCSF?

Baum: No.

Morris: Or did they just do it through their own lab?

Baum: They just had their own lab, down in West Berkeley. They had a very nice lab. I ought to be able to tell you—

And now they've gone off to start a big research, I think, on moss, moss, m-o-s-s. I may be wrong. In Costa Rica. They bought a big property in Costa Rica, and they're developing laboratories and things to study those rare, unusual plants in Costa Rica.

Morris: I believe that some mosses have some medicinal, therapeutic value.

Baum: Yes. Anyway, David and Evelyne are just the most incredible people. They love their work, and they get fun out of pursuing something for a while, and then they'll drop that and pursue something else.

Morris: I had a question. We've covered a lot of the aspects of what has made ROHO such an amazing place to be a part of. Has anybody asked you about areas that you always wanted to document that the office was never able to, or things that you see that might expand the reach of oral history [at ROHO] or in the profession?

Baum: Gee, you've caught me flatfooted here, because there were projects that we'd keep trying and trying and trying and never got off the ground. The one that we tried and tried and tried and never got off the ground was the disabled—now, I forget what we even called it, but it was the development of services

and so on for disabled people, and we tried for years and years and years, and, oh, that was a subject that nobody wanted to do because it was just not a glamorous subject, I think. The Bancroft Library was hands off. And we did put in some grant proposals; they never got anywhere. And all of a sudden it took off, and now it's still going.

Morris: And it's had a major national impact.

Baum: Oh, it definitely has. And what was another one? Social welfare. Social welfare, I always wanted to work on because that was—well, Ed Nathan was active in social welfare. We had James Leiby, Professor James Leiby, from the School of Social Welfare. He was writing a book on the history of social welfare in California, and he was very eager. He had a whole list of people who should be interviewed. He would be willing to do some of the interviews, and he did do a couple of interviews for us, one was a social welfare guy from state government.

Morris: Yes, I remember he was very helpful in advice and introductions for interviews that we did. And Ed Nathan became one of those people who was helpful financially every now and then, wasn't he?

Baum: Well, let's see, he became head of the Zellerbach Foundation, but I don't think we did much with the Zellerbach Foundation.

Morris: He's the one that urged us to interview Ruth Chance and John May.

Baum: Okay. That's right. But what was that project?

Morris: That was a history of Bay Area foundations. That was the beginning of the history of philanthropy, which continued as a couple of series and then went into the Gerbode project. Ed put together funding from the Zellerbach Foundation, Gerbode Foundation, San Francisco Foundation, and the one that Claude Hogan was the director of [vanLoben Sels.] There were four foundations that divided up the cost of John May and Ruth Chance interviews, and the supporting interviews to that.

Baum: That became the history of philanthropy, yes.

Morris: Yes.

Baum: That you did. And we always wanted to get Ed Nathan, who had been quite a leader in social welfare, but he turned it around; got us to do it [an interview] with Bill [William J.] Zellerbach, and Ed Nathan takes a back seat, and so it's not really an interview of Ed Nathan. He weaseled out, which is too bad, because he was part of the social welfare project that we wanted to do and really never got off the ground. The Bancroft Library wouldn't touch it—even

though there was a wonderful collection of social welfare papers that they wouldn't accept.

- Morris: Those were the papers Professor Leiby collected, weren't they? They didn't accept them?
- Baum: They wouldn't accept them for years and years and years. I think they finally accepted them.
- Morris: It was such a disappointment when they didn't accept the Jerry [Edmund G., Jr.] Brown [gubernatorial] papers.
- Baum: No, that was different. That was politically—no, I just think there were some things that were lower on the snob list, and the disabled students and social welfare were them.
- Morris: But the disabled project, as far as ROHO was concerned, took off because there was a woman who was, herself, disabled, who—
- Baum: Oh, yes, Susan O'Hara, sure.
- Morris: Yes, so the right person makes a difference.
- Baum: Most of the things that ever happen in this world, I believe, happen because the right person is there and somehow they are able to put together things that won't work in such a way that they do work.
- Morris: That's very good, yes.
- Baum: So the Lennettes walked in the door. Okay, so there they were, and there was Sally, just happened to be available, so we've got these marvelous projects that, of course, Sally is still going on with.
- Morris: Ed Nathan got Tom [Thomas] Layton interested, who later helped us to do the Frank Gerbode oral history. Then I think it was Tom as much as anybody else who saw to it that we eventually did a project that included an interview with Ed Nathan. It was ten, fifteen years later.
- Baum: Yes, yes. But as I say, it's not an interview of Ed Nathan. I always was so disappointed with it, because he just deferred to the Zellerbachs. But, yes, Tom Layton has just been—I mean, we ought to do a list of our heroes who were non-ROHO employees, who have been such a help to our projects.
[laughs]
- Morris: Yes, and the way quite often that people we've interviewed have turned around to be our strongest supporters.

- Baum: Yes. And kept telling us other people who should be done, yes, yes.
- Morris: I came across some notes of a talk that Charlie Morrissey gave at ROHO a few years ago. He said that there are now opportunities for good oral histories to be done on the cold war era, including McCarthy, of Joseph [R.] fame; the business community; and local history. He said nice things about ROHO; and then he said that local history work should get away from the antiquarians and get into social issues on the local level; and that family history was something that could be greatly improved if oral histories got away from genealogies and beyond “hatches, matches and dispatches.”
- Baum: [laughs]
- Morris: ROHO has never done much in family history per se and local history, but when I think of the consulting, the small groups that come to us, it seems to me you spent a great deal of your time going out and talking to local groups.
- Baum: Yes, I think that was purposely. A lot of things I thought were not suitable for a university, but they were suitable, they were worth doing, and that what we could do is help our historical societies to do them. And so, yes, I consulted with a lot of them. A number of our staff, particularly Elaine—oh, God! I’ve forgotten her name. What’s Elaine’s last name?
- She didn’t do many interviews for us, but she became our outreach person, Elaine Dorfman. And often she was recommended by ROHO to some other organizations—she did work for Magnes Museum.
- Morris: She had an ongoing class on oral history methods at Vista College here in Berkeley.
- Baum: Vista College, yes, Vista College, and I think all the local oral history people still go by all Elaine Dorfman’s rules. She had rigid rules about how you do things properly, which she said came from me, but I don’t think I was as rigid as she was. I mean, she wanted them to do a good job, yes.
- Morris: And people did it for her.
- Baum: Yes, they did it. It was good, yes.
- Morris: There are still people doing interviews for the local League of Women Voters and the Berkeley Historical Society who tell you they who got their original training from Elaine Dorfman.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: Amazing.

- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: That about covers the territory—
- Baum: That's good.
- Morris: —that I had to do with with you. I don't think it's the end of your oral history, however. More people have designs on you.
- Baum: It's the end of my memory. I think my memory is worse today than it's been. It's very—and then it comes back. But when you forget Elaine Dorfman's name, that's terrible.
- Morris: But it did come back.
- Baum: Yes.
- Morris: I think we've mentioned all the names, between us, of people that we wanted to mention. Did anybody bring you a legal agreement?
- Baum: No, no. Oh, this was something I thought would be—a job description.
- Morris: Oh, this is what I sent you. The OHA chronology.
- Baum: Yes, I just put this in the folder.
- Morris: I will send that along with the tapes when I send them in to Lisa [Rubens].
- Baum: Now I've forgotten what I've been thinking about. Well, I'll do better after I eat some breakfast. [laughs]
- Morris: It's a good time to quit, then.
- Baum: Yes.

[End of audiofile 23 (tape 23, side B not recorded), end of interview]

Appendix A: Interview Histories

Interview History—by Germaine La Berge

The idea of interviewing the “mother of oral history” at Berkeley floated around the Regional Oral History Office for years, all the while that Willa Klug Baum served as director of ROHO. Only after Willa retired in 2000, though, was she willing to even consider changing hats from interviewer to interviewee. It took four years before Willa and I, the first of her four interviewers, sat down in her rambling house on Spruce Street in Berkeley to begin recording. Unlike the oral histories Willa conducted, this one is a twenty-first century production—complete with minidisk recording, word processing for transcribing, streamlined procedures for internet access. As we found out, a true outgrowth of the processes she and early oral historians set in place in the 1950s. We all stand on her shoulders.

Willa and I met three times, July 28, September 8 and 13, 2004, in a cheery upstairs bedroom where there would be quiet and sunshine. In retrospect, I realize her illness even then was advancing—Willa struggled with the stairs and also with the discomfort of sitting in one position for very long. But she sat back in the rocker and began to reflect on her childhood and family background with great openness. One sees here the seeds of her widespread (and sometimes avant garde) interests coupled with common sense and practicality. In the course of five or so hours, we traveled from Chicago to Germany to New York City to Nebraska and finally to Ramona, California—and that only took her through high school! We covered also her education at Whittier College, Mills College, and the University of California, Berkeley; the early married years with Paul Baum and births of two children; and finally, the seedlings of oral history at The Bancroft Library.

Germaine LaBerge
August 31, 2006

Interview History—by Malca Chall

The five two-hour sessions I recorded with Willa Baum are more akin to conversations than the standard for an oral history interview expected by Willa Baum during her tenure as head of the Regional Oral History Office. As the interviewer I accept full responsibility. Perhaps this is understandable considering that my desk was behind Willa's for thirty-three years and that we had had countless conversations about oral history, the staff, and office management at our desks, or over lunch and coffee in the library coffee room; had sadly attended memorial services for mutual friends; and had, with pleasure, gone together to lunch or dinner, or to plays, ballets, and art shows, during and after those thirty-three years.

Willa, when she finally agreed to do her oral history, claimed that she could not remember very much about her years with ROHO and therefore was a poor subject for an interview. We responded that many of our interviewees could not remember all the answer to our questions but that the questions, themselves, could assist the researcher, and that they often brought out serendipitous information that was even more important than the answers to the questions. Whether or not she believed that argument, she did accept the fact her career in oral history had significance.

I had agreed to interview Willa about her career from the earliest beginning of oral history at Berkeley, 1953-1954, up to about 1972-1973. My career with ROHO began in 1967; obviously I knew nothing about the earliest years—much less, in fact, than Willa might claim to have forgot. My research started with several boxes of ROHO/ Baum memorabilia in the ROHO office; then I went to the Bancroft Library to search through three cartons of administrative NRLF records labeled #101, 30, and HT-1. All the contents were full of treasures. There were Baum folders; administrative folders from the days of the Regional Cultural History Project (1954-1965, labeled Milczewski, Michel, Bean.) They contained minutes of meetings, memos, letters, statistics. They showed how Willa and Corinne Gilb fashioned the RCHP, and how Willa, alone, moved it on, because of her tenacity and the influence of her personality and her intelligence upon academics, donors, and interviewees.

By 1965, when ROHO was a division of the Bancroft Library, even before Dr. James Hart, became director in 1970, Willa was bringing in major individual donations, and grants, which enabled her and a small staff to plan for and produce many oral history volumes on diverse subjects. Her very detailed Annual Reports, begun in 1965, and her equally detailed Monthly Logs, begun in 1966, indicate Willa's interest in showing, as clearly as she could, what ROHO accomplished from year to year. Also, a constant flow of stories and articles about ROHO which Willa and the staff published in CU News, and in UC and the local Bay Area press provided other important sources of information about the office. I read and took notes. I was impressed. I tried to put the material into some kind of order to have it available for our interviews session.

We began our recording sessions on February 16, 2005, and continued on February 23, March 2, March 6, and March 16. The final interview was done on . She never opened the transcript, which was sent to her on July 20, 2005. Sadly Willa died a year later (May 18, 2006). Most of the preceding two years Willa had been ill. She would get up late in the morning or early in the afternoon and go to the theater or out with friends. We scheduled our interviews for 10:00 in the morning, but often Willa had not finished breakfast, so we didn't start until much later. We

interviewed in one of the many upstairs bedrooms. We sat at a small table, with the microphone between us, the recorder on a corner of the table, and my notes on a small stool at my feet. Occasionally, Shirley, Willa's invaluable housekeeper, brought up tea and perhaps something else to eat. After two hours, we went downstairs and ate a hearty and delicious lunch prepared by Shirley, during which we talked some more about ROHO or news of the day. When I left at 3:00, Willa was very tired, and usually she went to bed. This was our routine for the first four interview sessions.

About the interview process itself: In my concern to get as much information on the tape as possible, I often would feed Willa many pieces of data—often too many at a time—hoping to elicit a response, in case she might have forgotten. She rarely forgot anything. I regret that in my haste to get the information out, I often didn't stop long enough to give her time to respond. But, of course, when she did respond, her responses show the value of oral history. She told how she learned to “wiggle around” bureaucratic impediments, her opinion about time wasted on writing grant proposals, about time wasted learning to use the earliest computers, about having to explain over and over again why producing oral histories cost “so much” money.

She talked with pride, but not braggadocio, of how she set standards for oral history: the honorable introductions, the interview histories, the use of publicity and the outreach to libraries where hundreds of our interviews are deposited; the presentations of the oral history volume to the interviewee, and the pleasure it meant to his or her family and colleagues; of going from a staff of two, then four, to finally some thirty-three; and a budget that went from \$15,000 to \$500,000. She was proud of her staff and wanted to talk about each one. Unfortunately, we had no time.

As I edited the transcript I removed many of the “crutch” words we both used often: “well,” “and,” “so.” I clarified many of the confusing sentences I uttered when setting forth statistics and background information. Although Willa complained about the digressions, the paper shuffling, the hunt for information in the catalogues and notes, I think she would have accepted this conversation as something like an oral history.

I agree with Chita Fry, Willa's and my longtime friend and fellow editor, who said by phone from her home in Washington, D.C., “Thank the gods we were there during those years with Willa.”

Malca Chall
August 3, 2006

Interview History—by Eleanor Swent

The ninth interview of Willa K. Baum was conducted on April 6, 2005, at her home, beginning at 10 a.m. Willa was wearing a robe, and her long hair was in a single braid. She nibbled some fruit early in the interview, calling herself "bad girl" for breaking her own rule that eating and drinking during an interview made too much noise. We sat at the large oak dining room table, bare except for the centerpiece, a small bronze head of Hubert Howe Bancroft, given to her by the Friends of The Bancroft Library in recognition of her work.

After a few minutes, the phone rang and we could hear a message being left on the answering machine. Butchie the parrot interrupted often, squawking from his cage near her chair. Finally we retreated to a quiet upstairs bedroom, and the interview proceeded more calmly for two hours. This reminded her of one of the first interviews she conducted many years ago with Dr. Newell Perry, who sat in a rocking chair that squeaked. Typically, she said, "Oh, he was such a dear man."

The general goal of this interview was to discuss special interviews and series projects, and Willa consulted the ROHO catalogs, praising Suzanne Riess for her work in producing them. At the end of two hours, the topic was not exhausted, so a second session was conducted a week later, on April 13, 2005. This time, Butchie's cage was covered and he remained quiet. The interview opened with a discussion of a bamboo plant flowering in her garden, which naturally led her to recall something of the history of bamboo in California.

Throughout her remarks, while discussing the nuts and bolts of funding and producing oral histories, she focused on the crucial importance of interviewers and expressed genuine affection for the interviewees. She identified needs to benefit the profession at large: a third book in her series of books on oral history, this one on how to catalog oral histories, to aid researchers; and a national oral history registry. Although firmly reticent about her personal activities, she freely expressed her delight in ROHO's accomplishment, always in terms of gratification to interviewees and aids to historical researchers.

Eleanor Swent
August 29, 2006

Interview History—by Gabrielle Morris

I recorded two sessions with Willa, both on sunny mornings in May 2005, in a comfortable upstairs bedroom of her rambling Berkeley brown shingle home a few blocks from the Berkeley campus. The first session focused on her early years at what was then the Regional Cultural History Project, when the office and oral history were both in their infancy. We continued with her recollections of the founding of the Oral History Association in the mid-1960s, including comments on some of the pioneers in the field and some issues that shaped the profession.

The second session dealt with the origins of the Earl Warren Gubernatorial Era Project in the 1960s and early 1970s, including project development, funding, interactions with Warren and other key interviewees and advisers; and subsequent projects on California state government, scientific and social issues; as well as comments on various ROHO staff members. For many of the events we discussed, I was on the scene as an interviewer on topics of state government and politics, philanthropic and civic organizations, and the UC Berkeley Black Alumni project.

The interviews were loosely structured and Ms. Baum responded thoughtfully and with interest, often briefly but with sharp insights on issues that had been particularly important to her. On both occasions, she seemed ready to end the discussion promptly. In retrospect, it seems possible that her professional life had receded somewhat in importance to her in her retirement.

The tapes of these final interview sessions had not been transcribed at the time of her death, so she did not have the opportunity to review them, to expand or revise her responses, nor to comment on errors and omissions in the conduct of the sessions by the interviewer.

Gabrielle Morris
August 29, 2006

Appendix B: Remembrances

Remembering Willa Baum by Ann Lage

Born in Chicago on October 4, 1926, Willa's unconventional childhood and youth included schooling in Germany, Switzerland, and New York in the 1930s and 1940s before settling in Ramona, California for high school. She was a star student at Whittier College. Her youthful interests and job experiences were diverse—skiing, folk dancing, playing piano and trombone, reading history, working as a social reporter on a local newspaper, and fruit picking. In 1947, before enrolling in the master's program at Mills College, Willa hitchhiked across the country. The following year, she enrolled at Berkeley as a graduate student in U.S. history (one of only two women in the program at the time). In the next eight years, she married, started a family, studied and taught American history, and became involved in the fledgling Regional Cultural History Project, which soon became the Regional Oral History Office. Starting as transcriber and research assistant, she was officially appointed in March of 1955 as interviewer/editor specializing in the fields of agriculture and water development, at the grand salary of \$1.70/hour.

When Willa assumed the directorship of the office in 1958—supervising a staff of two to four part-time workers and overseeing a shoestring budget—oral history was just getting underway as a recognized research methodology. She immediately grasped the significance of the tape-recorded interview in creating new primary resources for scholars (much as Hubert Howe Bancroft did with his *Dictations* in the 19th century.) Over the years, she built a nationally acclaimed oral history office documenting subject areas such as the arts and agriculture, biotechnology and banking, higher education and engineering, music and mining, politics and printing, health care and health sciences, and community history. When she retired, she left a loyal staff of 35 employees, still many part-timers, with an annual budget of \$500,000. The growth of the oral history office came by dint of Willa's leadership and entrepreneurial spirit, and the gifted and tenacious fundraising she and her staff pursued; every project and a good part of the office's administrative costs were supported by gifts and grants.

The Regional Oral History Office was the second university program in oral history in the country, and Willa was a pioneer in the development of the field nationwide. She was a founding member and leader in the Oral History Association, and her publications on oral history methods, processing, uses, and theoretical approaches have guided several generations of oral historians. She has mentored countless community historians as well as Berkeley faculty and students in the art and practice of oral history. Her concise and eminently practical book on designing and carrying out an oral history project, *Oral History for the Local Historical Society*, first published in 1969 and now in its third edition, is still recommended reading for beginners to the field. She later co-edited *Oral History: An Interdisciplinary Anthology*, which addressed leading issues in oral history. The procedures and practices she established at ROHO on matters from legal releases to nuances of transcribing and editing interviews to ethical treatment of interviewees have provided models for programs across the country. She was truly a founder of the field of oral history. In recognition of her many contributions, Willa received upon retirement the Berkeley citation, the University's highest honor, and The Bancroft Library's Hubert Howe Bancroft Award.

Willa's training as an historian and her vision of the importance of primary resources in historical research always informed her work with ROHO. From the early days, she fostered ROHO's projects in a diversity of topics of central importance to the history of California and the West, often before they became established subject areas in academia: ROHO's series on forestry, water resources, and environmental groups began in the late 1950s, well before the field of environmental history was developed; ROHO's Suffragists and Women in Politics series began in the early 1970s, before most campuses had women's studies programs; more recently, ROHO recognized the importance of disability history and began documenting the disability rights movement with oral histories which are now available to provide primary research materials for the new disability studies program at Berkeley.

Willa's historical vision helped ensure the enduring value of the oral histories created: in designing the 10-year project (1969-1979) of 140 interviews to document the Earl Warren gubernatorial era in California, for example, she saw that the perspectives of Warren's chauffeur, classmates, and hunting companions were included alongside his cabinet members, that Warren's career in criminal justice prior to the governorship was recorded, and that the oral history of civil rights leader C.L. Dellums was accomplished under a broad definition of the Warren era. She and her staff worked tirelessly to continue documenting California state government, designing and funding projects on the Pat Brown, Goodwin Knight, and Ronald Reagan governorships. The resulting oral histories have been source material for myriad scholarly studies since 1979.

Willa was always indefatigable in pursuing the documentation of University of California history. The colleges of Chemistry, Engineering, Environmental Design, Letters and Science, and Natural Resources; the departments of History, Economics, Geology, Anthropology, among others; and the Offices of the Chancellor and of the President as well all received calls from Willa Baum, prevailing upon them to sponsor oral histories with distinguished faculty and administrators. She worked with the Class of 1931 to establish an endowment fund for oral histories with distinguished alumni. Entitled "The University of California: Source of Community Leaders," it has created rich oral histories with distinguished alumni such as banker Rudolph Peterson and Kaiser executive Gene Trefethen, while also providing further opportunities for binding the University with its alumni. Chancellors came and went during her long tenure on campus, but Willa Baum was a well-known fixture representing the University at the Class of 1931 reunion and other gatherings of Old Blues.

Never one to adopt new ways precipitously, Willa didn't enter the computer age herself, eschewing email and word processing right up to (and beyond) the turn of the new century. Nevertheless, once cajoled into the digital age by her staff, she recognized Internet publication as a means to her longstanding mission to make ROHO oral histories widely available for scholarly research. Under her leadership, ROHO was the first major oral history program to begin placing its collection on the Internet.

Willa Baum was a woman of broad interests and many accomplishments, not least among them raising six children, Marc, Eric, Rachel, Brandon, Noah, and Anya, born from 1952 to 1972. (For the *Who's Who of American Women*, she listed her avocation as "childrearing.") She loved theater and music and attended Cal Performances productions of all varieties, often in the company of her sister Gretchen or one of her ROHO colleagues. A former teacher of English as a foreign language, for many years she shared her home and made lasting friendships with scores

of international students studying English in Berkeley. Her Monday evening dinners, with family, students, and an array of friends and former interviewees, were legendary.

To take the measure of a long and complex career is sometimes difficult, but in Willa Baum's case the evidence is tangible. Her most lasting and visible achievement was the collection she built at ROHO—more than 1,600 oral history interviews, in 800 repositories worldwide, many of them now on the Internet, filled with firsthand accounts by significant participants in historical events. Much of this record of the recent past would have been lost to future generations of historians had not Willa Baum recognized in 1954 the value of the fledgling discipline of oral history and for the next forty-five years applied her unflagging energy and commitment to recording and preserving the history of California and the West.

Ann Lage
May 2006

A Brief Personal Recollection by Richard Cándida Smith

I first met Willa Baum over twenty years ago when we sat side by side on a tour bus one Saturday afternoon at an Oral History Association meeting. At this point, I cannot remember exactly the city or the subject of the tour. I have never forgotten my conversation with Willa, in part because I was meeting one of the pioneers of the Oral History Association but even more so because I was impressed by the fervor of her position. She wanted to know about the projects I was working on and who I was interviewing. After I told her what I was up to, she expressed disappointment that I planned on publishing an article based on the interviews. "Why couldn't the words of the interviewees stand on their own without a whole bunch of interpretation?", she wondered, "Why couldn't I work to get their perspectives out more broadly instead of my own?"

For the next hour we debated whether in order to get the best possible interview, the interviewer needed to be thinking how what was being recorded might translate into material for an article or a book. We both had strong opinions on the subject, and I know that two decades later, neither of us had come around to the other's side. Almost every time I ran into her, she teased me about our first conversation and asked if I was still clinging to my regrettable, and to her, my backward-looking, convictions.

During our conversation, Willa was a good debater, making her points carefully and cogently. She was also one of the best listeners I have encountered. She heard what I had to say. Her commitment to oral history came from an intense interest in what others said. She did not abandon her own perspectives, but she knew that in order to learn from another person, one has to start by listening, by asking probing questions that help elucidate what one does not understand, by allowing the other person to speak. That we disagreed, even over a topic of such telling importance to the field in which we worked, was perfectly fine with both us, for disagreement is the starting point for dialogue. Oral history as a movement has been about finding out what people think about things of importance to their lives and why.

I still believe that the most information-filled interviews occur when interviewers struggle with how they will communicate what they are hearing to others who will never meet the subject of an oral history. When they synthesize what has been recorded in a form that reveals more clearly what was said is important for understanding an aspect of the past. That said, Willa's longer view had a great deal of justice and a greater dose of realism about the brevity of historical interpretations. Few readers today turn to what Hubert Howe Bancroft wrote about the more than four hundred stenographed dictations he took in the 1870s and 1880s on the history of California before the U.S. conquest. His interpretation is a curio of the past, but scholars and students continue to return to the words of Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, María Inocente Pico de Avila, Juan Bernal, María de las Angustias de la Guerra, and many others whose words Bancroft had recorded. The testimony of men and women who lived the history ultimately is what still lives and moves us.

Historians and other scholars have made ample use of the 1,600 interviews added to the collections of the Bancroft Library during Willa Baum's tenure as head of the Regional Oral History Office. A century from now, the students of the future, curious about California during the twentieth century will still be reading those interviews, but very few of the many books and articles that have drawn or will over the years draw from them. Every generation writes its own history. Willa understood that the dialogues she and her fellow interviewers began would continue over the unknown centuries. Her work has allowed the people she and her colleagues interviewed to touch future generations for as long as there remain human beings interested in finding out more about their past.

Richard Cándida Smith
Professor of History
Director, Regional Oral History Office

Appendix C: Memorial Address by Gray Brechin

Every summer I join several hundred others to see a play in Berkeley's John Hinkel Park, courtesy of Franklin Roosevelt and some dozens of nameless workers that he saved from destitution during the Depression by putting them to work building the trails and a lovely outdoor amphitheatre under the oak trees in the park. Because of financial stringency, those employed by the Civil Works Administration who were themselves a discarded resource used whatever was at hand to build the amphitheatre in this case, the smashed concrete from sidewalks and roads they were elsewhere improving, the same material with which they built retaining walls and the splendid Berkeley Rose Garden. Economy produced ingenuity and an artifact conducive to community that we have been using ever since—a bunch of friends and strangers gathering together for a few hours each summer with picnics and wine to hear old stories told anew. That's what Willa, a child of the Depression herself, wanted to do and what she spectacularly did because she was fired with the same vision of the common good that drove so much of the New Deal and indeed the Progressive movement in the 20th century.

Those workers used smashed concrete, but when I think of Willa, I think of the Christmas card catalogues that someone gave her and which she used as daybooks instead of squandering short money buying new stationery. Once she had removed the cards, she pasted incoming and outgoing correspondence related to ROHO into those bulky books which now constitute an invaluable chronological record for anyone wishing to study the development of oral history as a profession in the United States for the nearly half century during which Willa was one of the pioneers in the field. Many of the notes are on sheets of paper cut in half if they were not fully used, since Willa was always saving resources in order to stretch whatever funds she had to capture more stories before they were lost.

Those stories are vital for creating and preserving community, which I've come to realize was the purpose of so many of the New Deal projects that I am now studying. She was explicit about this, saying that a good oral history should bring the community together [so that those in it would] know who their forebears in the neighborhood were. In the same spirit, farsighted WPA supervisors sent interviewers into the field to capture the stories of ex-slaves. Those taped interviews are among the most heavily used at the National Archives today.

But what interested me most when I interviewed Willa and those who knew her both personally and professionally is how she made ROHO itself a community by using to full advantage a resource that was then often ignored or discarded by the academic old boys network—educated women such as herself. Charles Morrissey, past president of the Oral History Association, confirmed what I had, over the years, observed: ROHO was composed almost entirely of women. These were extraordinary women, well educated and socially-minded, many of them officers or presidents of the League of Women Voters with broad interests and degrees from the Seven Sisters or other colleges, often somewhat desperate housewives looking for challenging work with flexible hours so that they could raise families, women who were recommended or simply walked in the door, women for whom a living wage was not the first consideration.

It was just this resource which, at the same time, was working to save San Francisco Bay and the cable cars, stopping freeways and disastrous redevelopment, which was creating much of the

environmental and preservation movement that we now take for granted, and that was vitally important in keeping warm the embers of the public good when others would have doused it.

Willa wanted continuity for her projects, which she got in decades increments with the loyalty she earned: over those decades, with her encouragement, Willa's "girls" became experts in those fields which interested them so that they could ask just the right questions, often of men disarmed by those for whom they might not have had the respect or caution that their interviewers merited. Few of those women had the all-important PhD, which so often incapacitates those of us who get them from being able to talk coherently to anyone outside of our fields or the academy. Willa stopped just shy of getting hers; under her tutelage, her staff saw its job as twofold: to communicate clearly and to serve others—traditionally feminine roles and crucial, I believe, to the formation of community.

Interviewer Susan O'Hara said to me, "I never saw another university office where there was so little ego involvement. There was a genuine search for truth there." When I asked Willa how she had created such an esprit de corps within an institution notorious for backbiting, she said simply, "I guess it was because we were not hierarchical. We hired top-notch people, and there was never a sense that one person was better than another. We all just tried to do the best we could. If someone came in who did feel that they were better," she added, "they would soon find that they weren't happy and would go away." (I might add that seldom have I heard a more pregnant conclusion, and I wish that I had asked a follow-up to that remark.)

How, then, did ROHO under Willa Baum manage such a high-volume, high-quality output under such conditions of budgetary stringency, or perhaps because of it? That is a question that I feel should be left to a sociologist, anthropologist, or management expert, though I doubt that the results could ever be replicated except by an exceptional individual. It takes someone fired with both a vision of the common good and a will to match it, which is why I have come to see Willa in the mold of Franklin Roosevelt and those such as Harry Hopkins, Harold Ickes, and Frances Perkins with whom FDR surrounded himself.

There's something novelistic about Willa's name itself, for in her case, the key was this: her driving will, combined with vision, created a horizontal and transparent organization embedded within one which is traditionally vertical and opaque, and she miraculously kept it going for the nearly half a century that the Bancroft Library has been at UC Berkeley, and those of us who depend on those superbly done interviews are forever beholden to her and her staff. She did so because she felt that she had not a career to be advanced, but simply (as she told me) the best job in the world. Eleanor Roosevelt said that Franklin felt the same way about his job. Both, in their own ways, left us the tools with which to create community, as well as the models of their own remarkable lives in doing so.

The rest is up to us.

Gray Brechin
 Willa Baum Memorial
 Morrison Room
 October 22, 2006