

[Judith Windle interviewing Mrs. Margaret Dunn Beckwith in 1978]

00:00 Margaret Dunn Beckwith: So you want to record.

Judith Windle: Oh.

MDB: "...".

JW: Well I just wanted to start with, with your name "..." your maiden name.

MDB: Margaret Dunn.

JW: Margaret Dunn.

MDB: Yes.

JW: And now it's Beckwith and you were a student in, in which years?

MDB: The second, second year of the Normal School you see. It was built in 1915

JW: "..."

MDB: Because the normal school in Vancouver was crowded and the students, people from here wanted to become teachers had to go to Vancouver which was difficult for the people, Vancouver Island people so they decided, that's a really political thing, to build a normal school here to accommodate the Victoria people and Vancouver Island people. But it also accommodated some from up-country who, whose parents didn't like the idea of sending their young daughters to wicked city life Vancouver. They thought Victoria, this is really true. And "..." so, I was in the second year you see which started in, in 15 and 6, 15 16 and I was in the 16 17 year. Now the reason for, for so many of us being there, another reason was that "..." the university was cut up at that time. You see there was no "...". University Vancouver was just starting up and there was no university here. University of Victoria hadn't got going and so in the meantime, we were going, a lot of the students here were going to normal school to fill in that year. Some of them went down to university after it was [inaudible], but most of us "...", most of them were teach, became teachers. Now, [inaudible] at this time so great was the need for teachers that they allowed a graduate from second year high school to go to normal school for three months and then they could go out and teach for three years out in the hinterland out of the BC. Then they had to come back and take three more years, "..." three more months training. That gave them a second degree "..." teaching certificate and they could teach for another few years on that. Now then "...", some of them had to come back and take matric. Now I was just happened to have finished matric at Victoria High School and "..." I wanted to be a teacher so, I was only 16 and I went to the normal school. Most of my friends were a year older than me 'cause I missed a year in, in in junior school. And then I went to, to the normal school with my friends and graduated but I couldn't get my certificate because I was only 17. I had to be 18 when I got my certificate. So I was a whole year "..." waiting for a job, waiting not for a job but to, get to be old enough to get my certificate. Now I could have gone up-country and taught even though, under those circumstances, but it was very rough in those days. "..." So much so that "..." a sad thing happened. A girl was teaching up at one of the "..." towns up north and "..." some of them had a teacher [inaudible] attached to the school and this girl had a boyfriend and "..." she was going out with her boyfriend but in the small town gossip started and it got so bad that the girl committed suicide. And then the government appointed a girl named Lottie Bowron who had been secretary to Sir Richard McBride, "..." and whose father come from Barkerville, was a gold commissioner up there. You know the Bowron Lakes. They're named after the family. Well she was appointed the, a sort of an inspector, social inspector to go round to the schools and [inaudible] hinterland and see how the teachers were accommodated. Usually a teacher had to go and stay with a secretary of the school board. And "..." and then "..." and get to school out of by walking usually. Now Dr., Mr. MacLaurin, wasn't doctor then, and was principle of the normal school and I went. And "..." he knew that I was looking for work but my mother wouldn't let me go to this wicked north land unknown because "..." as one of the teachers "..." told us. He said, now you girls will be appointed to a place where there'll be some, a lot of men and they'll pay you a lot of attention because they're looking for a wife.

05:00 MDB: The loggers and the farmers up in the hinterland. In fact, they counted on, on the teachers populating the, the area. I had a lot of my friends, "..." several of my friends married in the north land. One particular girl, I'll tell you about. And this teacher told us, now he said, now when you're in this little town, he

said, they'll pay you a lot of attention and you will notice it. You got "... one particular man who you think is pretty nice and he'd been the nicest man in that town but don't forget that when you get, when you get back to your own home town, back to Victoria, how would he measure up with her boyfriends in Victoria. And that was good advice but a lot of the girls, quite a few of them, married "... One girl in particular named Carrie Townsend [inaudible]. I might be able to find a picture here. "... Went up to the Windermere Valley and married a farmer up there and she had, I think it was eight children. And she worked very hard because came the Depression not soon after. And the "... her, she came from a hard working family down here. They were Salvation Army people. And "... she had, I think I'm right in saying she had eight children, and they worked so, all worked hard on the, in the farm and she put all those children through university. And now she, she died just, just last year. And "... a mutual friend had her in to tea and she was interesting this. She had, she would start talking nonstop, you know she was that kind of girl. But, and she'd tell the adventures she'd gone through up in the Windermere Valley.

JW: When you got married were you expected to stop teaching?

MDB: Yes.

JW: Back then?

MDB: Yes. There was a case in town where a girl, one of, one of my friends who was at normal school with me got married. She was teaching at George Jay school. She got married and she didn't tell the school board and she was fired right on the spot. "...

JW: Were you prepared for this in the normal school. Did they tell you that your teaching career might be cut short? You know, were you warned?

MDB: No. We, we just knew that that was the rule. The normal school didn't tell us. In fact this girl was a bit of a devil anyway. She was very "... unsavory sort of character "... But her, and she married a man named Good [inaudible] which is "... Funny. Well she, now she died just recently. She was here in Victoria and I didn't know it. But there are a few of us still around and some of them with better memories than mine could tell you more about it.

JW: What was your school day like in the normal school?

MDB: Well, "... very much like "... university or a senior high school. "... I should, have you been up to the, up to the building itself? Well "... down. This, this picture's taken in the [centre?], this is the centre. Now down this way "...

JW: East end.

MDB: Oh, the east end was a, a little classroom where.

JW: Oh pardon me, the west end. I'm sorry "...

MDB: Wait a minute, yes that's right.

JW: [inaudible] the west end.

MDB: West end, that's right. There was a "... , there were doors there and this was a little classroom there and it was meant to be a model. There were the two teachers, model teachers. One was Miss Scan, Miss Scanlon who had a senior class from about grade four to grade eight, mixed [too?]. Was sort of thing that you'd meet in a country school where we had eight grades. I'll tell you about one I went to. And then at the other end, the east end, was another classroom with another teacher with little children. And that, in that teacher was Miss Baron. Now they were there teaching youngsters. And these two were, these two teachers had been picked from the Victoria school by, by the normal school people from the Victoria teachers as being extra good teachers. And they were samples of a sort of thing. Now, we, anytime when we were not in class we could go down and sit in their classroom and watch them teach. And "... later on in, in the normal school days they used the public schools for, for model schools. "... Oaklands School is one and I had a friend teaching there and they said oh "... times are hard today.

10:00 MDB: I've got a model school but normal school students and they come down. Like now they go out on, what do they call it, their, I have a word for it. The students from the university education department go out and do their, their teaching in, in, in a school somewhere. In the city or "... " and then they have people from the education department come and [inaudible] teach. Well, in the normal school we didn't take, we never took direct control of these classes but we could go and watch the teachers and that was very good for us. But we didn't have much time to do it because our days were filled up. Well we had "... " I'll show you the, the teachers, see if I can remember the teachers' names. This is, this is "... " Dave Robinson. Now, he was a brother of Dr. Robinson who was the Minister of Education and he was a dear. He was very like, much like an uncle of mine and he taught us physical ed and, and health. And no, no this lady, this lady took health. He took physical ed and geography and that sort of thing. And he was a very much loved teacher, Robinson. And this is Mr. Dunnell who lived up on the hill behind the normal school. You know those little streets that go in there. He was very artistic. He as an art teacher and he, his house could look over the normal school and to the mountains. And "... " he taught us art. And then this is that MacLaurin who was the principal. He later became Dr. MacLaurin and "... " was in education department.

JW: Did he teach any subjects?

MDB: He taught arithmetic and literature. And this was "... " the lady, now I'm trying, not sure whether her name was Miss McKenzie [Mackenzie?] or Miss McLean [MacLean?]. I think it was McKenzie. And she was engaged to Mr. Farr who was another, "... who was "... " teaching at Victoria High School at that time who later became a teacher at the university, at "... " Craigdarroch and became principal there. Mr. Farr. And then this is H.B. MacLean of writing fame. You've heard of him. And he was "... " I knew him quite well because he had been principal of George Jay school where I had gone as a student there and he had been moved from there up to the normal school to teach writing, and what else did he teach. "... " I think it's something called nature study.

JW: Had he developed his famous "... " writing style at that point?

MDB: No, no, it was later on that he wrote that. He and his brother-in-law who's name is MacKenzie, wife's brother, developed it and "... " they did a good job because they got out the [inaudible] and he used to go around teaching it "... ".

JW: What kind of writing did he teach you at point there?

MDB: "... " Now wait a minute. Now think, I'm trying to think if he, if he had started the writing and perhaps he had. Because "... " I was taught it and, and then I taught it myself. It was all through the schools you see. "... " You know what, what it's like. If you put your arm on the table like this you see, and you move, not your wrist or your fingers, its a movement from here and.

JW: I think they called it muscular movement didn't they?

MDB: Yes, you write like this you see. And, and we used to make ovals and, and, and strokes up and down you see. It's very good because you can write all day without getting tired. That's the "... " [inaudible] advantage of it. "... " H.B. MacLean, so I knew him quite well. We were, he lived not far from our place, we were great friends. Now, he, he lived, he just died a year or so ago [inaudible] in his nineties. And I, and my daughter and I were in Scotland visiting and oh, "... " when I was in George Jay School he had taught us the Lady of the Lake, Sir Walter Scott's Lady of the Lake and "... " it mentions Loch Katrine and the island in the middle of the lake you know where Ellen lived. And so when we were on, on the tour through the Trossachs we saw a lake with, the lake and the island in the middle of the lake. Ellen's island in Loch Katrine. So I got a picture of it and I sent it to H.B. MacLean and his daughter, who was doing his correspondence for him [inaudible], sent me back a thank you note.

15:02 MDB: So, but it, it made a circle you know [inaudible]. Well our day, what's that, what, we were registered alphabetically. Boys and girls in my class. "... " and Agnes Anderson in "A" and then I was "D" see, Dunn you see. Dunnetts and Campbells and those people and boys and girls in, in my room.

JW: That was unusual for that, wasn't it, to "... " that era in time really to have boys and girls together because "... "?

MDB: No it, it came up through the high school. It was the same at the high school.

JW: It's later on the boys had their own class and the girls were in their separate class.

MDB: Oh did they?

JW: And they weren't mixed.

MDB: Well, that was so at Victoria High School because they had so many girls, more girls than boys, that they had one class of all girls. It just happened that way, but "..." not many boys were going into teaching at that day, at that time. But some of them "..." had become, most of them had become quite famous [of those?] survived. It came the war you see right after this. In fact this was during the war that we were here. And all these boys went away to the war and some of them never came back. That was [some of mine?] high school matric days too. Then we would, we would, we would register and roll call and then we had a real timetable and we would go from class to class "...". Mr. MacLaurin's room was here and Mr. Robinson's room was here.

JW: On either side of the main entrance.

MDB: Yes, and they each had an office. Each teacher had an office and if you've been in the building you know that downstairs was a small gymnasium.

JW: It's still there.

MDB: Yes and after the war "...", that "..." this building was used, you know, as a hospital after the war and that gymnasium was a sort of dormitory and our family used to go up and we'd get some of these returned POWs and "...". Most of them were from England and they'd been through the Japanese internment camps and so on. They were in poor condition physically and they were brought there so they would be "..." revived so they could get back to England "...". We'd go and take them out on Sundays and that sort of thing. A lot of people did that.

JW: They had the little plunge pools down.

MDB: Yes.

JW: Did you ever use those?

MDB: Oh, yes, there was just one.

JW: Well there was one in the girls' end and there was one in the boys' end.

MDB: Oh was there. I didn't know there was one at the boys' end. But it's downstairs here "...". It was down and near the exit on the east side of the building on the north, on the back of the building. Yes, that was, that was used "...". Never used it for swimming teaching but it was there for us to do some swimming any time, and I, and often a basketball game or something like that we'd go and take a dip. And I believe they covered that over afterwards "...". I wonder what they've got in side there.

JW: Well, at one end they filled it with cement.

MDB: Oh did they?

JW: And the other end, it's just boarded up.

MDB: [Is that so?]

JW: And it's, it's just "..." change rooms.

MDB:[inaudible] "...". Yes

JW: Did you have morning assemblies? Everybody gather in the auditorium?

MDB: Not everyday. No. I can't remember how often we had it but we did have them quite often. And some of

the classes, Dave Robinson's class, he took more than one, one class. He took the whole school for some of his classes and so did Mr. MacLaurin take the whole school at once. I remember Mr. MacLaurin teaching a lesson on "... deception of. The, the eye can be deceived sometimes by, and he, he illustrated it by putting a line like this, you know, with arrows at this end, you know, that's [inaudible] line like this and arrows going in makes the two lines look different. I remember him illustrating it that way. They were all very good teachers "...".

JW: And the five of them taught the whole school body.

MDB: Yes "...".

JW: Di you ever have home economics or domestic science?

MDB: Yes, a Miss, if her, if her name was [McKenzie?] that's the lady, she taught that. And there were "...". The boys, some of the boys took these classes too because they were going out "... expected to be appointed to places where they'd have to do their own cooking and they, they joined in the classes.

20:00 MDB: For the domestic science.

JW: Do you remember what sort of classes?

MDB: "... It was very practical sort of thing. "... I can't remember anything exact, classes. But we had, I didn't pay much attention to it as a matter of fact because I was living at home and I'd had home ec in high school and sewing at high school. I didn't pay much attention to it but "...". She also taught us health lessons and boys and girls together. "... But care for hair, care for the body, care for "...". And I remember one lesson, "... care for nails, and I could remember one boy who was a bit of a smart alec, but he was a very handsome boy, so the teachers all gave into him "...". And "... also he was a Beau Brummel. And I can remember him standing up. You know how the seats [inaudible] had to stand, they all stood up to talk to the teacher. Well see, back you see him stood up and instead of standing, slipping out and standing in the aisle. And he said the, the teacher had said that to use a file on your nails, you see and he, he thought that was too slow. He said why can't you use scissors and cut your nails. So the teacher and the student had quite an argument about that. We were all used to that because you know because we know he was just pulling her leg more or less "...".

JW: You've kept in touch with quite a few of these [old?] student classmates

MDB: Yes, quite, quite a few of them. "... One of them is my very special friend [inaudible] see if I. Now that's a girl "... It's terrible when you can't, that's "...Dunnell, Dunnnett girl. Now her family lived out in Gordon Head and she had to walk all the way into, into the normal school.

JW: Did you live close by to the school?

MDB: Yes, I lived "...". No, I didn't. I lived close by the high school and, and "...". It was a lot of fun because lived right across the road from the Victoria High School on Fernwood Road and I just had to listen for the bell [inaudible] walk across. One day I was late and that was a sin in those days and the teacher [inaudible] sent me to the office and Mr. Willis was principal then. And he said, Miss Dunn how, how is it you're late? And I said, well it's like this way Mr. Willis. I just live across the road from the school and I always wait until I hear the five minutes to bell, five minutes to nine bell ring, and I then I come to school. But this morning I didn't hear the bell and so I'm late. And he looked at me [inaudible] funny must to say that's an excuse he hadn't heard before and he said, he said "... living so near the school is no excuse for being late. See that it doesn't happen again. Yes sir "...". But, but.

JW: Did you walk up to the normal school?

MDB: I, I lived on Fernwood Road you see and now then its a long way from the normal school and yes we walked. And I had a route. I used to walk right down Pembroke Street to Richmond, and then several girls, who lived around the way, would gather and we'd walk up together up the hill, including Mr. MacLaurin. He lived up on Belmont, corner of Belmont and Begbie. The house is still there, it's made into apartments. And "... Begbie Street was not cut through you see but you'd have to come down the side streets to Richmond. And that winter that I was at the school, we had a lot of snow sometime, once in a while in Victoria you get a lot of school, lot of snow. In 1916 was a very bad snow. It was three feet in one night and "...". How to get to, through that, it was

difficult you see to get through it, and we gathered down "...". I can't remember how I got down to Richmond Road that day but this, this I do remember very well. Mr. MacLaurin and, and "...", a girl named Mary Ellen O'Brien who's here in this, in this group and "...". That's Mary Ellen there. She's a very pretty girl. She later married a city man and he was an alderman and they lived up on Pemberton Road in a nice old house, still there. Mr. [Nesbitt?] lived there for a while with them. But this particular day, the soldiers you see, it was during the war, the soldiers were being trained and "...", trained down at the Willows.

25:00 MDB: The old Willows Exhibition Grounds, you've heard of that perhaps. And the soldiers were down there and they were helping the city men to open up the streets because Victoria had no equipment to deal with snow like that. And the streetcar used to go up Richmond Road, up to the top of the hill there, just at the foot of Mount Tolmie [inaudible] and "...", some of the people, some of our people would take that streetcar you see up to the top of the hill, but we, I never did I think. We always walked. And this particular day "...", the postman "...", was the first to, to, to. You had to lift your feet you see and make a hole in the snow and then lift your feet and make a hole in the snow. It's very slow hard going. The postman was [tall thin Jack?] and he made the first mark up through the snow up the hill. Mr. MacLaurin went next and Mary Ellen O'Brien and I and Elsie Creeden and some others who gathered there and usually walked up in the morning. We followed you see, and in the meantime the streetcar with some students on it were, were going along. The soldiers were in front of the streetcar digging the track out with spades, that's all they had. And the streetcar would go a few feet and then we would go a few feet. We'd, we'd clap and shout, you see, [inaudible] and then the streetcar people would clap, you know, and make derogatory remarks at us because we were behind them. And so this continued all the way up. We didn't get up to the top of that hill until eleven o'clock. School was "...", very late that day but it was fun, you know. And the snow only lasted a few days and, and, and soldiers cleared, cleared the streets and streetcars could run. But that was a great experience for, for Victoria, particularly fun for the normal school students going up the hill. But that was a beautiful walk in the mornings, it was skylarks. A lot of skylarks used to be in that field where the junior, where the high school, the junior school isn't it.

JW: Lansdowne Junior High.

MDB: Yes, that was all a big field at that time and skylarks used to rise in the morning and sing. And they'd sing when we came back down in the evening. We didn't all come together but we came that same way around four o'clock in the afternoon. The skylarks would be singing. It was beautiful. And the normal school grounds weren't built, you know, they weren't beautified like they are now. But, Mr. MacLean, who taught us nature study, would take his class out [inaudible] one beautiful oak tree down on the the lawn to the, to the right of the building as you're standing looking at it. And we'd go down sit on the grass there and have lessons under this lovely oak tree and he would teach us the names of the trees around and so on. When I taught school I "...", remember those lessons and I'd get the children to collect various leaves and we would make books with the leaves and would press them and notice the shape and, and we'd have painting of them and that sort of thing. So that was very interesting. "...", Now what else can I tell you?

JW: You all were very close, weren't you, in, in that year in normal school?

MDB: Yes, we knew, I knew practically everybody in the school. "...", I had a [pile?] of these but I would say there was about two hundred of us.

JW: Everybody was very young.

MDB: Well you see.

JW: It seems, fairly young.

MDB: Well you see, "...", there was nothing else to do. I had wanted to go to university but there was no university here and "...", when it did get started it, it was affiliated with McGill. My husband, who was nine years, nine years older than me, was, you've heard of Joe Clearihue, "...", who was chancellor. Well, Joe Clearihue was in the first class, you know, of Victoria College and it was a little building beside the old girls' Central School. Just a little building. And the, there's a caretaker lived "...", beside it and he kept chickens and there was a chicken yard there where "...". The students "...". In, in the girls' Central School you could look down onto this building and see the chickens running around in the yard. It was all very cozy "...". And Mr. [Huxtable?] was his name and "...", I can remember, well this is going back to Victoria High School days you don't want that.

29:56 Long, long skirts, middy blouses and skirts. That was our uniform. I had a white, white middy blouse for the summer and a blue, navy blue one for the winter and that was, that was all I wore.

JW: Everybody wore that did they?

MDB: Yes, it wasn't a uniform but it was just the style.

JW: "..."

MDB: You know. And here some girls have got their winter ones on, you saw. And this is jumper now. Some, I had one dress like that and, but they're very long you see.

JW: "..."

MDB: Now this girl's name was Dougan. Do you know anybody around Duncan? There's Dougan Lake up there.

JW: "..."

MDB: She's a red-headed girl and she, she went up north somewhere and married a, a Russian chap who was quite common. Look at this, the boots you see, high, high boots "... that had to be done up with a button-hook, there are buttons up the side. And today if you ask anybody about a button-hook, they don't know what it is.

JW: In your physical education class did you have a special costume to wear?

MDB: No, "... Mr. Robinson who took us, said, told us you see, we were going to have some physical ed. We had to pass an exam in physical ed and first aid. And he would say, now "... just wear "... your ordinary clothes but "... , nothing tight like a collar, he said. We laughed at that because we knew what he meant because we all wore corsets in those days, you see. He didn't use that word, he said nothing tight like a collar. We all laughed. And he was a dear and, and I used to stand in the front. I was in the front line, I remember, and I remember one day I felt funny, sort of dizzy and I was going like this, swaying like this, and I was going to ask him if I could be excused you see. But he saw that I was not well and he came to me and he said, you better come home "... . He was a dear chap. As I say, very much like my uncle. Now that girl is a Bradshaw. Now she, she and her sister both went to school. One of them taught my children. And she taught at Monterey later on. Monterey School. She's still around. She lives on Beach Drive. That's Hazel McConnell. She's a very bright girl. And she, she's got a wonderful memory [inaudible], talk to her. She could tell you a lot more about, she'll remember a lot more than I do. And my own friend, Frances. That's an Edwards girl. Laura Edwards. Now she died just the other day. A very sad thing about her. She, she and her sister is here too somewhere. "... She and her sister both went to school and both taught and her sister got married quite early after. And "... her sister died and her, the husband was so overwrought, she's buried at Ross Bay, and husband was so overwrought that he went down to the grave and committed suicide on her grave. That was a very sad thing.

JW: During these years, the year that you were here was war time.

MDB: Yes.

JW: "... Did you have to keep a little garden plot?

MDB: Oh, not, not at normal school.

JW: No?

MDB: But I did at George Jay, at Willows School.

JW: [Because?] later on in, in the provincial normal school years, students had to keep the garden plots.

MDB: Yes.

JW: I was wondering if you had to at that [inaudible]?

MDB: No, we didn't at normal school. "... " but I, friend "... " a girl and I who taught at the Willows School. You see the roof of the Willows School just down over, just beside that big tree. See that grey building with "... " has some of those [inaudible] building. But I taught there before that building was built. I taught in an old, old building. Wooden building.

JW: When you were at the normal school did you go out practice teaching or was all your, just, you just observed in the model school?

MDB: Yes.

JW: That was the [inaudible]

MDB: That's all.

JW: [Contact?].

MDB: [inaudible]

JW: [inaudible]

MDB: Yes, we didn't. Wait a minute, wait a minute. No I'm wrong. We did, we did, but we just took one, we had to make out a lesson plan. We just went into the various schools around the city and taught one lesson and "... " I can remember going to boys' Central and Mr. Cunningham was the principal and he had a very tough class of boys and he was very strict with them. And I had to teach a lesson. I've forgotten what the lesson was, but I remember asking one boy a question and he didn't know about the various zones so I stopped, strayed from my subject to teach him what he should have known when I asked him the question. And I got criticized for that because it meant that I, I didn't get back to the main subject and I didn't.

35:00MDB: Get all done that I should have taught, you see because I had stopped to teach, I drew the thing on the, a circle on the board you know, the arctic zone, temperate zone and so on. And the "... ", he gave me a written criticism you see. And sometimes the normal school teachers would come around and watch you. Yes, that was, that was our practice teaching but it was only one lesson in a classroom where the teacher was there. You didn't have to control the class. I can remember going to another "... " classroom in the boys' Central where the teacher didn't have very good control of the class and the teachers at normal school told us, he said, you'll see this as you go, you'll see it. But he said, you can learn by seeing something that's done wrong as well as "... " as the ones that are doing a good job. Now, right next door to that one, by the way, there was this, this, today that would have been quite normal, the way this teacher taught. She wasn't too strict but right next door to her was a teacher named Miss Lillian Johnson who was Boss Johnson's sister who I knew very well, and she, she was very strict. She, she would tell the children, or read the children a story just before lunch. But she wouldn't start reading until they were all sitting with their hands behind their back, and that was, that was the normal way. She wouldn't, and when I taught at the Willows we had all the children had to sit that way.

JW: Was Willows the first school that you taught at after you.

MDB: Yes.

JW: Came of age?

MDB: Yes, that's when I got my certificate you see. I had to wait a year but in the meantime I had, Mr. MacLaurin had got me substituting jobs around the city. And I had taught here and there in the city schools for a few days. And then "... " I taught for two weeks at, at a little place called Glenora near Duncan. And he, he, Mr. MacLaurin phoned me up and said, that there's a teacher up there has to have two weeks off. Her mother has just died and she has to attend to a lot of business. And "... " would you like to take her class up in Glenora? And I said yes. So I "... " took the train up to Duncan and then, I didn't know where Glenora and it was dark when I arrived there and I got a taxi and asked him to take me to this secretary's house at Glenora which was a few miles out from the city. And I got all twisted around. I, "... " the sun came up in the wrong direction in the morning. It was the secretary's house and he was a returned soldier who had been overseas and his back, I think he had been wounded, his back "... ". He married a Belgian girl and he brought this Belgian girl with him and she was of a farming stock and she ran the place while the, all of the men of the house did was to collect the eggs and take



them to town and they always found an excuse to stay in town 'til quite late in the afternoon and didn't get back 'till all the work was done. Well I was, the, the secretary's wife took me to my bedroom, to my room, and "...", there was the old-fashioned wash stand with the big jug in it and she said "...", breakfast will be at seven o'clock in the morning. And the breakfast was like a big farmer's luncheon, a huge meal. And then I, and the water was frozen in the, in the water jug in the morning because there no heat in my room at all, and "...", then I had to walk about a mile to school and there was snow on the ground then, more there than there was here. And I "...", had big, big boots on and a big long overcoat and I had to walk to school, and just a little one-room school with eight, eight grades in it. Only about twelve children though. And I, there was no janitor service at the school. I had to clean it and I had to light the big pot-bellied stove to heat the room for the children. And I would be so cold when I go there that I couldn't hold chalk my hand and then I, the place had to be warm for the children and then at lunch time they all sat around the stove and had, ate their lunch. And then, and the last day.

40:00 MDB: I, I did this for two weeks, and as we had been taught how to make timetables you see for these eight grades, so I didn't have any trouble with that but teaching, you know, going from one to the other, giving this class some seat work and this one preparing something and it was quite a trick to get around. And they, they told us at normal school, if you can't do it all do what you think is important. Well, what was important in those days was arithmetic. Reading didn't have nearly the importance that it has today. Reading comes first today, as you know. Because it's a reading approach to every subject. If the child can read well that's, then he can teach himself but in those days arithmetic was tops. So I would give the children, have the blackboard full of things for them to do. The ones who could do seat work, and then the little ones, you'd have to take in a corner by themselves and, and do some arithmetic with them. And there was, there was no equipment in the school like the sticks that they had at one time, you know. Nor blocks or anything like that. And, but, I had a complaint from the, the wife of, the secretary's wife, used to do all the work on the farm while her husband he's in town. He "...", she, she told me that one of the parents had phoned her to say that I hadn't given the children enough homework and I thought I was doing pretty well giving them each a whole string of sums to do, you see, and then we'd correct them in class. But that was quite an experience. And then the last day, I can remember. I had a little suitcase and I had to carry that this mile to school and get the taxi from there. And my lunch of course. And I can remember how hard it was going through this snow and carrying this bag, and this. So I was glad when the two weeks was over. I don't remember what salary I got for it, but I know when I was, when I was appointed at the Willows the next year when I got my certificate when I was eighteen, I got fifty dollars a month. And then I [inaudible] got a good inspector's report and I was raised to sixty dollars a month. But I never got more than sixty dollars a month the five years I taught.

JW: [inaudible] difference than today.

MDB: Oh my yes. Well you see there was no, there was no, no teachers "...", I was, it was before the days of the pension too, you see. And "...", you were asking about little gardens. Well, I had my, my students at the Willows, we had them and I had some pictures of them when we had our reunion "...". And, but, I, this friend, other teacher and I, Miss [Macgillivray?] and I, took a course with, under Mr. MacLean at the summer school one year and how to do this work, you see, and how to set it up with the children. And you could, we, he taught us how correlate it with "...", nature study and "...", arithmetic. And we laid out the plots, you see, and so on at the Willows and each, the children had. Of course there the radishes and those things would be up and eatable and then we appointed somebody to look after it during the summer. And so we had nice gardens down there. But we didn't have that at the normal. But this, the trend was coming you see, and then we took this summer course and we carried it on.

JW: Did you have "...", a picnic or a graduation ceremony at normal school?

MDB: Yes we did. Now [inaudible] remember that. It wasn't picnic. "...", We had a, I think we had a, we had a dinner in the gymnasium. That's right. We had a dinner in the gymnasium and Miss [McKenzie?] or whatever, home ec teacher, set it up. And we had speeches by the various teachers and that sort of thing. We used to have concerts in the, in the auditorium and we found that little stage very inadequate. And I can remember some of the boys "...". Lloyd Wheeler, where is Lloyd? Oh this boy, Stubbs, he was, he became of a school up in Courtenay, he was lots of fun. And Lloyd Wheeler played a violin and then they would sing song, make up songs, and, and get up on this little stage.

45:00 MDB: This boy became a great canoeist and he used to canoe from Vancouver to Victoria at nighttime by himself, studying the stars. This boy, Chris Sieverts was one of a very fine Icelandic family in town. He became a doctor of some kind. I think he's still teaching. His cousins are here in town. His brother was a, was a writer on

the Times for a long time and "...".

JW: At these concerts, everybody took part did they?

MDB: Yes.

JW: Everybody had to perform something?

MDB: Yes "...". Nothing compulsory about it. We had a nice little choir "...".

JW: Who instructed your choir?

MDB: I'm trying to think. We had, there was a lady. It must have been somebody who came in from outside. But I remember her teaching us "..." how to sing the Lord's prayer "..." to a very nice setting. The Lord's prayer. And doing some, and then, then the, the do re mi business was still in then, you see, and we had, and the Victoria schools there was a man named Mr. Pollard who was a music instructor and he used to go around to all the schools and "...". You know anything about the tonic sol-fa? Do, re mi, "..." fa, sol, la, ti, do? Are you a musician? Do you sing or play?

JW: Play piano.

MDB: Do you? Well, some of us, some of the students could play the piano too.

JW: There was a piano in the auditorium, wasn't there?

MDB: Yes. I can remember at one of these concerts, one of the girls "..." sang it's a, the song It's a Bowl of Roses, I can remember. And she, who was a very clever girl, but she had bobbed her hair and we were all very shocked at that. We thought that was just terrible. She was one of the first ones who cut her hair. That was a terrible thing to do in those days. My young sister cut her hair too and I can remember how mad I was at her "...". Because to do that, you know, it was, it would put, it really put you in the class of the street walkers in those days who wore rouge, you know. All these things were sinful in those days. To bob your hair and wear rouge. And "..." we weren't allowed to do it at home and, nor at school. But I can remember Mona, Mona "..." [Misener?], and she didn't stay here, she went to Winnipeg and became interested in the theatre and acting, that sort of thing. She's a very clever girl, but she just started at normal school and shocked us all terribly. [inaudible].

JW: Were you in the choir?

MDB: Yes.

JW: How often would you perform?

MDB: Oh, just at concerts. Just at concerts.

JW: I guess amongst yourselves you found that there was some hidden talent.

MDB: Oh yes.

JW: Go on stage and perform.

MDB: Yes, yes. Yes indeed.

JW: You didn't have a drama society or a drama club then, did you?

MDB: No "...". No, we had one at Victoria High School and I was a member of it and was in several plays there "...".

JW: Was there an annual this year that you were at the normal school?

MDB: If, if there was I haven't got a copy of it and I should. I think there must of been but I can't remember.

JW: I'm just wondering since it was such a, a new school.

MDB: Yes

JW: [inaudible] what was underway at that time. Was there a lunchroom downstairs?

MDB: No, there wasn't a lunchroom that I can remember. There was a gymnasium "...". Behind here "..." down the hall there were, were locker rooms. We each had a locker. And I can remember on the day that, the last day when we graduated, we had the dinner down in the gymnasium, and then the next day we graduated and we each went to, each principal said he would be in his office if we want to go and say good-bye to him. And I can remember going to Dave Robinson's class "..." office and crying. Oh, crying. We were all going to go back to the locker room crying, crying, crying. This is an emotional thing you know. And I remember going to Mr. MacLaurin's office and he said, Miss Dunn I want to thank you for helping along in the class.

50:01 MDB: I'd always sat at the back because I was tall. And I looked at him. I said I didn't realize that I had been any help "...". I was interested in the work and with the, and, you know, the teachers were nice and, and you cooperated with them. There was no discipline problem at all at the normal school. Nothing at all.

JW: How many would be in a class?

MDB: Well "...".

JW: It was arranged alphabetically

MDB: Yes.

JW: Was this one where the cut off was?

MDB: I don't know, I can't tell you that. I would say there were twenty-five or thirty, yes.

JW: Everything was still so new then, were there any.

MDB: Yes.

JW: Any bugs to be ironed out?

MDB: In the building?

JW: Yes.

MDB: No, the building was, "..." the only, the only thing was that "..." the grounds weren't fixed, you see "..." and the streetcar used to come up and it used to stop right at the back there. There, we, if we wanted to use the streetcar, we come out the back of the normal school and, and down that little walk. And there was a stop for the streetcars right there which was very handy. On rainy days I would take it and it, it would go along Fort Street and I would get off at the corner of Fort and Fernwood and walk down you see. I didn't often take the bus.

JW: Was there a tuition to get into normal school in that year?

MDB: Now I suppose there was but I can't remember that. If it was, if there was one it wasn't very much.

JW: Were your books supplied?

MDB: Yes, yes, the books at there, they were the books that the, you would be using in, in the schools where you would go. Yes, they were supplied. And Mr. MacLaurin and another man had, had written the arithmetic books that we used. And then, Mr. MacLean must have got his writing going then because he taught writing up, up there, that's when. And "..." what was I saying, he also taught nature study.

JW: What did you do for nature studies?

MDB: "...".

JW: Did you go out for walks?

MDB: No we didn't. We went out, I was telling you, we went out and sat out under the tree and taught.

JW: [inaudible]

MDB: There was a book that we used that had been written by Miss, Mrs., Miss Lawsen and Mrs. Henry Esson Young. Mr., Dr. Young had been, was "..." Minister of Education at one time. They lived on Olive Street where we lived right around. And Miss Lawsen was editor of the children's page of the Colonist. They had written a little book that took in things like "..." evaporation and rain, formation of rain and what happens to the water and continued down to the rivers and how it flowed to the ocean. And talks about the circulation and, and movement of the earth and the stars and that sort of thing on a big scale. And then, "..." we used that little book, textbook.

JW: The normal school was later dedicated and, and renamed Young Building.

MDB: That's right, that's right.

JW: After those two.

MDB: That's right, after Dr. Young, yes. And now there's a MacLaurin building at the university. And I don't think there's a, a Robinson building.

JW: His standing would be would be vice-principal, wouldn't [inaudible].

MDB: Yes, yes.

JW: When you went into their offices, can you remember anything about the office? Did it have a fireplace in it?

MDB: No.

JW: No?

MDB: No. I remember "..." later on when, when it was the college, and, and Jeff Cunningham was a member of staff. Do you remember him? He always took his lunch in a little paper, brown paper bag. He liked to be, thought to be "..." not one of the upper-crust, you know. He wanted to be thought to be one of the boys, of working class. He wasn't that at all. He was a very intelligent, very well-trained person, you know, with a very fine mind. But he, instead of having his lunch at, they must have had a lunchroom for the teachers somewhere. And he, instead of having his lunch with them, he'd go downstairs and have his lunch with the, with the caretaker downstairs. I always remember that. This was later on when, when it was after, after I had left.

55:01JW: I've heard some, some nice stories about the janitor at, at the normal school.

MDB: That's so.

JW: Was he very obvious at the time you were there? Was he just.

MDB: No.

JW: Never seen?

MDB: No, but other janitors around the various schools I had, I got to know. I was on the school board later on and got to know the janitors. All the schools in Oak Bay and most of them in the city.

JW: Had, had the "..." landscaping started at all when you were there?

MDB: No.

JW: It was just.

MDB: No.

JW: Just natural.

MDB: Just, just natural and it was very pretty the way it was. See the normal school was under the provincial government "... " and they evidently had lots of money and it was they who set up the landscaping of it. And various groups who have had control of the normal school, who wanted to do something with it but it's always been, "... " people have [kicked?] and I hoped they never do to put a row of houses along Lansdowne there you know. But I hope they never do because that's just a beautiful spot and I hope they keep it that way. "... ". When the college went, moved from Craigdarroch up here, I was on the, on the school board and represented the school board on a committee that was set up to look after this move, you see. And "... " Mr. Ewing, Dr. Ewing was the principal then and he said to me, he said, I don't want to come up here until there's a place for the students to gather and have lunch because they can learn as much from each other as they can learn from us teachers. So then, it had been the hospital you know and they had, they had built those two little buildings behind. The doctors wanted one for their medicine room, and then there was the other one, was built beside it, and they put a bridge across. And we hired a lady to, to run the lunchroom. We made a lunchroom and put in "... " ping-pong tables and that sort of thing for the, for the, for the college boys. And then the other building was sort of a recreation room because the gymnasium here was so small it wasn't very, very much use. But I've had a lot of connections within that same normal school and I hope it, those gardens are always kept. There's Miss [Dogan?] and this girl became a nurse, and that's myself, and this is my friend that I was looking for here, Frances Brown. Now, she's got a wonderful memory. It was her aunt, Miss Lawsen, who had the children's page in the Colonist, and her brother, Tom Norris, became a lawyer and a judge. He died just a year ago. She has another brother over in White Rock. But she was the youngest of a family of four. She had three brothers older and I envied her because whenever she went to parties one of her brothers would take her and bring her home. "... " My brother was younger than me and I thought that was awful "... ". And there we are again. That's the Dogan girl with the red hair. And that's "... " her name was Nelson [Nelsen?] and she and Frances became great friends and "... " she died quite early in life and "... " big blow to Frances. Now here we are having a picnic somewhere. And here we are on, on the normal school steps again.