

[Judith Windle interviewing Laretta McCall Holdridge in 1978]

00:00

Judith Windle: And which year you grew up there.

Laretta Holdridge: ... I am Laretta Holdridge. Of course I was Laretta McCall. ... I graduated in 1930-31, the year '30-'31\ . Of course that would be '30 ... the year '31\ . There were just five of us at that time who obtained a school out of a class of over two-hundred.

JW: Jobs were really hard to come by [inaudible]

LH: Yes, very, very difficult. It was the "hungry thirties" time which was way before your time of course. And it was just after the big Wall Street crash so everyone seemed very anxious. We all spent our time going around to the various school boards looking for positions, but very few of us got positions. I was lucky my father knew the inspector in Prince George and of course I didn't get the position until the end of October anyway, so I was not one of the five. I was an afterthought. When we first went to normal school, it was after many years thinking about it and our fathers scraping the barrel to raise the fees. The fees were about one-hundred dollars. And that was a lot of money.

JW: Then you had to buy your books on top of that.

LH: Yes. Yes. And when we first went we were greeted in the big auditorium by Dr. MacLaurin, who wasn't Dr. MacLaurin then ... a very fatherly type of man who took a special interest in everyone. He met us at the door and as we came in and asked us our names and he was like a, a patriarch or a father to us. Then we were assigned to our different rooms. Now what else would you like to know so far?

JW: Did you come from out of town or were you a local girl?

LH: No I grew up in Victoria here. We have been here our family since 1921\ . And of course this was in 1930\ . My father was a funeral director here, McCall. And ... of course it was very hard to get established. But I had always wanted to be a teacher having grown up in the church and having taught Sunday school and CGIT [Canadian Girls In Training] and Explorers. I loved children. So it was the culmination of a dream when I was allowed to come.

JW: How old were you when you entered the normal school?

LH: I was seventeen.

JW: That was the youngest you were allowed to be wasn't it to get in.

LH: Yes, that was right. You had to be eighteen when you graduated.

JW: Hmm.

LH: So I had just turned eighteen when I graduated. Mm hmm [yes].

JW: What certificate were you given upon graduation?

LH: ... Now let me see. It seemed to me it was an EC if you hadn't gone to college. But I had had two years college. So I, I got an EB, Elementary Basic.

JW: Was there any, I know jobs were hard to get then.

LH: Yes.

JW: And some point during that year, were you directed towards the, the lower grades or was it kind of left open to you?

LH: It was left open. There wasn't any streaming. Later when the classifications changed to elementary ... professional and academic they strea ..., you specialized. But from the beginning I specialized in music although it wasn't on my certificate. I went to the University of Washington and ... specialized in training of small choirs and school choirs. John Gough seemed to like to put me into schools where they needed the music. So that was an access ... accessory.

JW: He was the superintendent then wasn't he.

LH: Yes. Although when I, when I first graduated I went to Prince George up to a little tiny log cabin school, Bednesti, twenty-seven miles west of Prince George. And ... there wasn't any opportunity there for music.

JW: How long were you up at that school?

LH: Two years.

JW: And then did you come back down to Victoria?

LH: Yes. And we had a Mr. May then before Mr. Gough was superintendent. And then Mr. Deane. And then Mr. Gough came. So I had taught thirty-two years in Victoria. Yes.

JW: Yes.

LH: Now coming back to normal school ... it's interesting that's it's called the Young Building now and it's the oldest isn't it.

JW: ... I think it was named after Dr. ...Young who was quite prominent in education.

LH: Yes. Yes.

JW: And his wife too I understand. She was quite well known.

LH: Yes. Yes. Mm hmm [yes].

JW: I was searching through the records and trying to decide if it was named after both of them or just one of them ...

05:04

LH: Yes. We had a very good staff. We had ... "Daddy" Dunnell, did you ever hear of him?

JW: Mr. Dunnell, yes.

LH: Yes. He was a man with long white mustachios. We, we enjoyed his classes. "Daddy" Freeman. I don't know why we all call, we called them "daddys" and "fathers". Maybe because they seemed so old to us. ...Yes. But they all seemed to take a very keen interest. We were, we had to make ... very definite lesson plans. Maybe they don't do this so much now. Lesson plan for everything.

JW: And your instructor sat down and .. helped you with this?

LH: Yes. Oh yes. Yes. It was quite personal even with two-hundred people up there. It seemed. They seemed to manage.

JW: In your class that you went into each morning, who was the teacher? [Inaudible crosstalk]

LH: ... Mr. English. H.O. English.

JW: What was he like?

LH: Yes. ... We had Miss Isbister for home economics. That's strange to have home economics in the normal

school.

JW: What did you learn in that class?

LH: Oh how to cook and make aprons, the way we did in high school and the way we did in grade eight, so it was a repetition. But more of how to teach it. This would be it. And gathering of recipes and so on.

JW: The home ec. [home economics] room was up on the, the top floor at the east end.

LH: That's right.

JW: Yes. Could you tell me something about that room. It's changed so much now.

LH: Mm hmm [yes]. I haven't been in it since. And that's forty years. But it, it had little Bunsen burners. And ... glass. A glass on the walls. ... Miss Isbister cooked in front of us

and then we were allowed to cook and so on. But she explained how to teach. How to teach it and the different ... grades and so on that you would give when you were assessing the students. You see in those days grade eight would be in the elementary schools. And grade eight would make it a person just thirteen or fourteen and here we were in just seventeen. It would make a big difference. Our art classes ... were very interesting. Dr. Denton taught the social studies. ... He was a very gruff man but very warmhearted. Every now and then when he'd get over-wrought he'd dash over to the windows and open up the window and spit outside the window and of course, we were quite ... shy. We thought this was dreadful ...

JW: He was very fair man wasn't he?

LH: Yes. Yes. His sons went into education apparently and one of them became an inspector. Yes. Now what else. Oh and we'd meet outside on the grass. We had tennis courts and we'd do, we've maybe had ... perhaps one dance a month. And we had a Literary Society. The president and a secretary and ... once a week, every Friday, we'd put on programs using the ... talent in the school. Some of it, it gave us poise and gave us confidence to stand in front of a class. That was good. I don't think they do that now, where they all meet and have a program. Now anything else that you'd like?

JW: Did you have morning assemblies? Did you meet in the auditorium each morning?

LH: ... Usually it was for the Lit. Society [Literary Society]. No we didn't. No ... as far as I remember. Right now my memory is starting to fade out. But we did in the high schools. But as far as I remember, we didn't. There was, we had perhaps one a week. Dr. MacLaurin would have a little bit of music. And Miss Riddell would call on the ... talent in the school to do something for that period. And it would go right into the Lit. Society [Literary Society] meeting.

JW: Each class wasn't ... to put on a show every once in a while?

LH: No. No.

JW: There were a lot of different ... societies or groups.

LH: Yes. We had a drama group, a debating group, a carryover from the Victoria High School. And this was all very prevalent in the high school at that time. Everything was geared to giving us confidence and poise so that we wouldn't go to pieces in front of a class. Which some people did. Oh very easily because it was a very, very ... strain time. The first time ... our practicums were made up of ... each Friday morning we would go out for a half a day to the local classrooms and help the teacher in the classroom. And then it would gradually get more and more. But the last part of the year was a, a two-week practicum. But now it's six weeks.

10:42

JW: That two weeks you were all on your own [inaudible] instruction.

LH: Yes. Yes. We, the great event was to go out from Victoria but the journey from Victoria to Sidney. My

practicum was in Sidney, Sidney Elementary. That was a big, big day. ... The Lit. Society [Literary Society] was responsible for having a gathering once, on Hallowe'en and Christmas time. So they, the Lit. Society, Literary Society as they called it was responsible for the social life ...

JW: Who was the teacher who sponsored the Literary Society?

LH: ... Now let me see, who would that be. Miss Isbister. She looked after it. She was our sponsor. Many of our class, class ... went on to become inspectors. Mr. Ferguson, was one. So when you look through them. And of course Hugh Farquhar became president of Victoria College, university [University of Victoria]. ... So you, I'm sorry I don't have the "Anecho" that I could point to the different people to follow them. Very, very interesting.

JW: The social life was, do you have quite a social life when you were up there [inaudible crosstalk]?

LH: Yes. Yes we did. They had a valedictorian at the end and a graduation ceremony in the, in the little tiny auditorium. ... Is it there now?

JW: Mm hmm [yes].

LH: Yes.

JW: It's used as the library now.

LH: Oh yes. ... The little steps up onto the stage, the statue. I don't know who it was, was it Socrates?

JW: [Inaudible]

LH: Maybe Socrates. On the right-hand side of the stage. It was a very, very ... structured, structured program.

JW: Did you belong to any of the societies?

LH: Yes. I, I happened to be the president of the Literary Society so I, I know quite a bit of it. Yes.

JW: Did the home economics class prepare any food for these ... events that took place?

LH: Yes. Yes they did. This was important because we planned it and Miss Isbister saw that it went through. Then we'd go down to the gymnasium, after. And that was interesting. Now is the gymnasium still there? Mm hmm [yes].

JW: Yes, it's still there.

LH: I should know because I've taken many classes up there but, yes.

JW: Did you have a get-acquainted a picnic in the beginning? Some years had a, a picnic down at Willows Beach or out at one of the lakes.

LH: No. Not that I know of. No.

JW: That the teachers would put on.

LH: No.

JW: So your, your wind-up was at the end of the year in each graduation?

LH: Yes. Yes. We had the dance that and then a picnic afterwards at the end.

JW: Where did you have your picnic?

LH: Willows Beach. Mm hmm. Yes. ... I can't remember exactly ... any other general events. ... The demonstration classes were very important then. They ran in connection with the normal school. They had

picked children. ... And there were two teachers there. I think a Miss Barron was one. ... And then you were asked to come and observe in these two classes of picked children from all over the city. I thought that was interesting when I look back on it.

JW: You weren't able to teach in there though were you? You just observed.

LH: No. No you observed.

JW: How often would you go down?

LH: ... Well it depended on the professor you had. And he would contact Miss Barron or the teach ... Miss Scarf (?) was another one. ... And then you would ... go down as a class and observe. And the class would be there.

JW: We've seen pictures of the model school where the children were sitting. Well where did you observe from? Was there a special seat?

LH: I can't remember that. I don't remember. Because the model school is, is was what it was called. You're quite right. It was at the far end of the school behind glass doors. They were separate. So we didn't hear any commotion or anything at all. But it was a great honour for any parent to have the child chosen to go there. Class distinction even in those days.

15:29

JW: Did you have anything else to do with the children I'm thinking when you were on a lunch break or [inaudible]

LH: We'd go in and ... help with the lunch duties. Supervise. We'd be asked and of course that was an honour to be asked to go in. They were held up as the epitome.

JW: Hmm.

LH: Yes.

JW: So I was thinking they'd probably have the physical education classes and, and time out on the grounds if you'd ... if you'd be able to you know [inaudible]

LH: We had two, as it was so close to the end of the War [World War I] we had two sergeant majors, Sergeant Major Bains [Bain] and Sergeant Major Frost. ... who came up and took, took us for PT [physical training].

JW: What did you learn in, in that? What did they teach you? ...

LH: Games. Fundamentals. As I had been in music all my life I didn't know anything about games except to play tennis and rounders. So they had a lot to teach.

JW: Did you have a lot of your classes in the gymnasium or were they held outside?

LH: Yes. No a lot in the gymnasium. We had strip, PE [physical education] strip which they were bloomers of course and long stockings. ... The fundamentals of grass hockey were stressed because if we did get into a city school which I did and many of us did afterwards, that would be the first thing a new teacher would be given, the job of teaching grass hockey. And you had to know. ... I went to Girls Central School ... when I left Bednesti after two years and that was the first thing I had to do, teach grass hockey. So many times I thank Sergeant Major Bains [Bain] and Frost.

JW: You mentioned tennis. Did they have the lawn tennis courts still there?

LH: Yes. Yes. Mm hmm [yes].

JW: Was there a tennis tournament at that time?

LH: Yes. Yes. Oh yes. You signed up for it. And it was very, very prevalent. People loved it.

JW: That was one of the big events then.

LH: Yes. Yes. And the prizes were given. So on at the last day, on the last day.

JW: Oh that was part of the graduation ceremony?

LH: Yes part of. ... Yes. Life was very easy and at the same time hard work, because they put all of the curricula ... subjects, curriculum subjects into one year. And ... you had to be very familiar with the "big blue book" as we called it, The Course of Studies, and know exactly what you were to teach. Of course in those days we had geography and history. Hugh Farquhar was one of our students ... and while he was there, while he was in ... Victoria College the year before he had a, did you hear this story before? A Madame Sanderson Mongin in French, who was the teacher in French ... had left. And they had a beautiful red-headed young girl come, Jean McIntosh. And he was in her class. Then he went to normal school and was in our year. He went away to teach and came back and married her. So she is now Mrs. Jean Farquhar. Interesting, isn't it.

JW: There were a lot of students from the, oh I guess the it was from '35-'36 year who married ... their fellow students. I was wondering in your year did that happen at all?

LH: ... No, I don't think unless, oh yes, there was one girl, Margaret Anderson married

Joe Phillipson who is now in the Department of Education.

JW: It, it seems funny how people can get together because I, I've ... spoken to many people and it was a very formal atmosphere and the boys seemed to be instructed on their own and the girls on their own.

LH: That's right. Mm hmm [yes].

JW: So it ...

LH: In fact the classes were segregated that way. Class D was made up of all boys.

JW: There was always more girls than boys.

LH: Yes. Oh yes. Mm hmm [yes].

JW: Somehow you managed to get acquainted and meet each other even though you didn't have [inaudible]

LH: Yes usually at these Lit., Lit. Society dances. And most of us had never danced and we had to learn to dance. So that was part of the PE [physical education] lesson.

20:08

JW: In the, in the physical education, downstairs next to the gym on one side was the boys' area and on the other side, was the girls'. You had the little plunge baths down there. Do you remember them?

LH: No I don't! That's new to me.

JW: ...There were ... a lot of people, don't remember them. I'm just wondering if they were used at, at all times. There was a little, little pool. It was maybe only eight feet by twelve feet.

LH: Mm hmm [yes].

JW: But ... some of the people have told me stories, other than other people just have no recollection.

LH: No. No I hadn't any. Course sh ... many of us were very shy and we were afraid to go out of any of our domains where we supposed to be so I wouldn't know.

JW: Yeah, well in your change room, would be right next to the gym.

LH: This would be in the change room would it? And I never even. No, we had little cubicles. It's so different from when I go up to the Rec. [recreation centre] now. ... and everybody undresses in exactly ... Oh yes, most interesting. A great change.

JW: You said ...

LH: We had a very lovely music teacher, a Miss Riddell. Has anyone ever told you about her? She wore the same dress all year round, but she looked lovely. It was a ... I can still see her with her beautiful green jade beads. And it was a green suit, a skirt and a top. High, her hair done up on the top of her head. But she was very, very musical. She didn't have any degrees but she knew the children's songs and could put it across. And she had us teach the class by teaching a song in front of these classes. Now that took a lot of nerve. And a lot of confidence because we didn't have any recorders or any flutophones or anything to use, not even an autoharp. So we had to use our own voice or the piano. And if you didn't have any piano lessons you really found it difficult.

JW: She ... auditioned, I guess would be the word, every student didn't she that came in?

LH: That's right. Yes. And then that's how she got to know the talent, the people who had talent. And then you'd suddenly be called up to her office and asked to do something in front of the Lit. Society or the Friday morning auditorium period.

JW: And she would, my stomach's growling, she would ... pick the choir then, would she?

LH: That's right. Mm hmm [yes]. And I don't know what happened to her. She didn't seem to be there too long. ... But she was fantastic. Mm hmm [yes]. She could do all kinds of things.

JW: Was there a piano in the auditorium for the choir?

LH: Yes. Yes. Down below the stage on the left-hand side. We had a woman instructress who taught us folk dancing, a Miss Coursier. Have you heard of her?

JW: No I haven't.

LH: Mm hmm [yes]. Very manish lady but she could ... she taught us all the folk dances. And of course in those days that would be one of the periods that you would use. It was in folk dancing whenever you went out to any of the schools.

JW: Well did she teach anything else or was she brought in especially for this?

LH: ... She taught health education. Yes.

JW: What did you learn in that class?

LH: Well ... to co-operate in first aid classes. We all to have a St. John's [John] Ambulance first aid certificate. And when we graduated we had a B, a B certificate. But she helped our two men. And then anybody, if we were to take a class swimming, if we didn't swim which I couldn't swim then at that age ... she would take, take the class for us.

JW: You went down to the Crystal [Crystal Garden] for your swimming didn't you?

LH: That's right. Hm hmm [yes].

JW: How often did you go down?

LH: Now I can't tell you. I really don't know, because I hated it! ... And I would do anything to try to get out of it. But I knew I that I'd have to do it some day. But she always came to my rescue. Yes I always said I would take anything in music but nothing in PE [physical education] but ... laterally I had to. ... I wonder what else. Oh in the,

in those days the street cars went up there so we came by street car to the normal school.

JW: Did you have a very long distance to come?

LH: I came from Pandora [Pandora Avenue] and Fernwood [Fernwood Road] so I had quite a, quite a distance.

25:01

JW: I've heard a lot about that street car.

LH: Yes, a lot of fun on it late at night ... going home from the dances. ... At the, oh about Christmas time my father had an old, old car which he gave to me because I was finding it difficult to get out to the schools and so on. There was an old Hupmobile. So as I couldn't have my driver's license (it had you had to be eighteen then) ... I got some of the older students, Olive Walsh was one, (she's now Mrs. Pope ... he was ... head of the poultry department in the Department of Agriculture) she'd, she would drive for me. So we'd fill up the car with students and with ... people and away we'd go, the old Hupmobile shimmying all the way. ...

JW: Was there parking for you? Where, where would you park your car?

LH: ... At the back. There was a tiny parking space. Very few had cars so I was supposed to be one of the elite. Little did they know! ... Yes. But it served its purpose because we were able to get out to Sidney on the last practicum.

JW: You went alone or did you have somebody else go with you?

LH: Oh no I had, a, a another student, Alice Craig [Alathea Clague? or Nancy Craig?] who became a, a ping pong champion of normal school ... Yes.

JW: Yes I heard from one other person there was a ping pong tournament down in the gym. Did you ever partake in that?

LH: Oh. That's right. Oh yes I plucked up my courage. Yes. I didn't get anywhere but I had a lot of fun! Yes ping pong tournaments. At one time they even had marble tournaments up there.

JW: Did they? Where would they hold those?

LH: Yes. At the back. Yes. That was interesting. All these little points come to light now. They come back in my memory. They ... we had a good time and yet it was hard work. We did learn the basics. Dr. MacLaurin had ... written a grammar book called, "MacLaurin and Goggin" [MacLaurin and Goggin : Elementary Grammar]. Have you heard of that? Which became almost our bible in the next year when we were alone in our little schools. Grammar was taught to the nth degree and it served its purpose; it was good. And now it isn't taught at all.

JW: No I've heard a lot about that book. And some people swear it was the best book ever written.

LH: Oh Yes. MacLaurin and Goggin. And then ... Dr. Campbell came on the scenes. He taught ... arithmetic up there. And he wrote an arithmetic book which we used. He ... he's still, he's in his eighties now and he still remembers all his students. Have you interviewed him? Oh, tremendous! Yes. MacLaurin and Goggin and then Campbell and somebody. I've forgotten with whom he collaborated. But ... I sometimes wish I had those books now to pass on to my grandchildren.

JW: Mr. Freeman was there too.

LH: Yes, "Daddy" Freeman. Another daddy!

JW: Did you call most of the men "daddy"?

LH: It seems like this. Not to their faces of course. No.

JW: He was a very fatherly type.

LH: Oh yes. He taught handwriting did he not? Handwriting and nature? We'd go on nature hikes down Richmond Road along the streetcar tracks and try to recognize the different flowers. We made various collections too which everyone did in those days. But we were able to label a, a few of them. Then when we came to our own schools up in the north we were able to identify the different trees. So he was a great help.

JW: ... When you mentioned identifying trees. At that point the landscaping was, was beautiful at the normal school.

LH: Oh yes.

JW: And somebody once told me that they had almost every tree from all over British Columbia.

LH: Mm hmm [yes]. I'm sure they did. It was beautiful. Yes and then of course the nature lessons we had would come in good stead later on. He was a great exponent of the, of the MacLean Method of Writing [MacLean Method of Handwriting]. And ... we were very proud of the fact that we were able to obtain a certificate which we would hang up on the log ... on the log, in the log cabin and in the schools and then carry on the same project. Even with my eight pupils I had, we would send samples down to Dr. MacLean.

30:16

JW: I was going to ask you about Dr. MacLean. Did you ever meet him?

LH: Yes.

JW: Did he come to the school?

LH: He came to the school. We had him as a speaker with in our, in our Lit. Society meeting. He had a great many funny stories to tell about the different schools from where he gathered some of his samples. But ... Mr. Freeman was a beautiful writer himself. So he was able to show to advantage the ... the good points of being a good ... writer. And of course he showed us how to write on the blackboard. And that this to me is a great point, the teacher's handwriting.

JW: Yes I've run across some teachers who couldn't write on blackboards.

LH: Yes. I know the writing would go up and down. But we'd have many, many classes of each one going to the blackboard. And he showed us how to, it seems so childish now but we take a great many things for granted, but ... to use a shammy and keep the boards clean and how to erase and so on, and the right, and the different kinds of chalk. ... We wouldn't think this was important, but it is! I did go to a new school once, Braefoot School [Braefoot Elementary School] and ... the teacher before me had been there and used a type of chalk, a red chalk which just wouldn't come off. And on hylo-plate this is very important to get a chalk which can be easily erased.

JW: So this would be in your writing class you'd be in on all this.

LH: Yes. Oh yes.

JW: What about your art class?

LH: I'm just trying to remember who the teacher was and I can't.

JW: Mr. Dunnell was he still there?

LH: That's it. That was it. Yes. ... Mr. Dunnell. Yes. Taught art. And of course it would be the stereotyped. He'd give a pattern or he'd show a pattern. ... not very creative. Mr. Gough was able to bring out the creative ... talents in people. Mr. Dunnell was very good but everything ... was stereotyped and measured. And of course maybe that was good for us if you were not inclined at all to any art ... you needed a pattern. So he issued all kinds of patterns and stencils which ... we used and made art books with samples.

JW: So a lot of the things that you were taught and had to prepare for normal school you kept and took out when

you were teaching.

LH: Oh yes. This was invaluable. Invaluable. Even Miss Isbister had things on ... on recipes and so on. Patterns we took with us. So we didn't have to spend the hours which people have to do now. But we had all of these and we went loaded with a trunkload of things which we could use. That was good. In that, in that age maybe. Not so good now. Because people are expecting creative things now and you, you just don't hold up a pattern and say, "Now you start up here and you do this: one, two, three, four, five." So that was different.

JW: I was going to ask you about the sewing room. I think it was off the cooking room wasn't it?

LH: Yes. And there were sewing machines. And we had lessons on the White and the Singer sewing machines. Those were the prevalent ones then.

JW: Hm hmm [yes]. It was a small room wasn't it?

LH: Very small.

JW: How many girls would take home ec. [home economics] at one time?

LH: ... Well we were divided into A,B,C,D, and E classes. When we first went they we were given IQ [intelligence quotient] test. And Dr. MacLaurin said we would not be divided according to our abilities but I have an idea we were because my best friend ... went into A class and I didn't. And I knew she was more intelligent than I was so I came to the conclusion we were. That wouldn't be prevalent today. No.

JW: I didn't realize that they used the IQ [intelligence quotient].

34:58

LH: Yes. Yes. In those days we had the classes we were taught at our normal school that when we had children a class of forty or fifty (at one time I had fifty, fifty-two in my class), we at the end of every month we had to seat them according to their rank. Oh that must have been devastating.

JW: Yes.

LH: When I think of how cruel that was. But of course that's our personal opinion now. Maybe we'll swing back to it. But I know when I was at Girls' Central [Girls' Central School] every class did that. Mm hmm [yes]. The children all had to line up around the room with their books in their hand, in their hands and then you called out, "one, two, three" and they moved to their seats. Aw that was dreadful. ... But that was the, that was the way we did things, then. Now I wonder what else about the normal school. I don't know why it was called "normal school", can you tell me?

JW: Yes it came from the French.

LH: Oh.

JW: It goes way back to Napoleon.

LH: Oh.

JW: And he did his education system in France and he decided there would be one norm for the primary and it was called "normal". And we just adopted this in Canada.

LH: Mm hmm [yes]. Mm hmm [yes]. And I see! There was an article in the ... what the news, the Weekender on this, did you happen to write it? ... Oh, I read it, yes. But then I'd forgotten. It was interesting. Of course the clock up above kept us all in order. Had to be very punctual. Never be late! Or you'd have daddy Dunnell and Dr. MacLaurin looking at us. He taught the classes in psychology and they were tremendous. He didn't called it child psychology just psychology. Class management. And this was important to seventeen and eighteen-year-old people to keep a class of grade eights in order.

JW: They were almost your age.

LH: Yes. Yes. In fact when we went into our schools many of the grade eight boys would fall in love with you, follow you around. As, as they were in the back woods and they didn't have the advantages of moving ahead and so on. They'd be in grade eight when we were teaching them.

JW: Did your psychology class help you?

LH: Oh very much! Once again, I wish I had his notes. ... He was very methodical, very inspirational, told many stories to keep your interest and didn't stand for any nonsense. A great believer in examinations.

JW: You had a lot did you?

LH: Yes. But he didn't post the results the way some of the people did and still do, I understand. He had a feeling for people. Mm hmm [yes].

JW: Did you ever see him in his office?

LH: He would call you in and ask, oh yes. He would call you in and ask you how, he didn't ask you how your home circumstances were, but if ... something was troubling you and it showed up in your teaching, he would call you in.

JW: [inaudible crosstalk]

LH: Like a father adviser, yes. Oh yes we idolized him. Yes ... his ... I see where his son is up for chancellor. Tremendous. Donald was in my year at ... at Victoria High School. Mm hmm [yes]. Great many accomplishments. Now what else can I tell you?

JW: Did you make many friends with the students who had come from out of town?

LH: Oh yes! In fact I'm going to Hawaii with one. A Francis Kirkham(?) from Duncan. There used to be a grocery store or a chain of ... grocery stores and one here in Victoria on Blanshard Street and ... her father and her uncle started the chain. She came to normal school and we became very friendly. So just last year, just ... first time in forty years she had been down to my brother's establishment, an aunt of hers had passed away and he said, "Well didn't you go to normal school in 1931?"

And she said, "Oh yes, I went with your sister Lauretta."

So she phoned me and we're going to Hawaii on January the 17th after forty years.

JW: Aw that's lovely.

LH: Mm hmm [yes]. Not quite forty. ... Let's say that.

40:15

JW: There were many or most of the students were boarded ...

LH: Yes.

JW: ... within the distance of the normal school. Did you, were you able to visit them at their houses. There was one person who mentioned that ... this wasn't encouraged.

LH: No. ... They were very fussy about the company with whom you kept company. That's not correct, but anyway. ... Francis was one of them. She boarded with this lady on Yates Street and I wasn't able to go and visit her. She came to my house on Pandora [Pandora Avenue] and Fernwood [Fernwood Road]. And incidentally the lady with whom she boarded was the one who passed away. She had kept in touch with her and had looked after her, her affairs and so on, all these years. So those ... those attachments were kept on over the years but we were not encouraged to visit except in our own homes. Yes, that would I hadn't thought of that. Later on ...

in the next few years, after the years I was at normal school, they even paid students to come down to the normal school. I guess you know this through the many interviews you have done.

JW: Yes they got their way paid down and back.

LH: Yes.

JW: That didn't happen in your year though did it?

LH: I beg your pardon?

JW: Did it happen in your year?

LH: No. Oh no. No. We had a surplus. You see two-hundred students and few jobs so they didn't pay them. Then the summer schools seemed to go ahead. The model school was broken up and then they had a demonstration class in the summer schools and it was held in the gymnasium in the base, base, in the basement of the normal school and students were picked to come. There ... became, there became a shortage of teachers (you've heard of this) so they had to encourage ... working ... housewives to come back and upgrade their certificate and also to ... go over their normal school training. So they had a class in the summertime, six weeks and it usually was a grade two class. And the teachers would come, and there's a balcony is there not around the gymnasium? The seats would be up there and the little class would be down below. And then ... it was held for six weeks, all day and this one class. So you had to keep a class or the teacher had to keep a class going as she would in an ordinary classroom while the teachers would observe. And then ...

JW: Do you, you happen to know when this started? It was in the late thirties?

LH: I don't know. It was after the War [World War II].

JW: Oh after the war.

LH: Yes, after the War.

JW: I was just wondering how long the model schools were kept going.

LH: I haven't any idea. I don't know. But it was the break-up of the model school that prompted this action. Yes. I think Winnett Copeland will tell you that. Cuz it seems to me that she was in charge of one of the classes at one time. ... Now anything else? Can you ask me another question? Then I get going ...

JW: I'm just wondering where you ate your lunches, was there a lunchroom there? Can you remember a lunchroom downstairs.

LH: No we ate outside. On the green grass, under the trees. They, they were very fussy about the upkeep of the garden so we had to be careful. But many of us went home because we were, we were close enough. When I had the car, I used to fill up the car and away we'd go and be back again at 1:00.

JW: Were there any rules about those garden places where you could walk and couldn't walk?

LH: Just signs everywhere. When the grass got a bit weak or a bit yellow they'd put a sign up and then we'd move over to the tennis courts. Mm hmm [yes].

JW: Did they have the rose gardens down below still when you were there, below the tennis courts?

LH: I couldn't tell you. I think so. I think so. It was the show place of Victoria. Anybody who came to visit Victoria would always go the government buildings, to Butchart's [The Butchart Gardens], if it yes, and up to the normal school. Yes. Well I seem to have rambled a lot but I don't know whether I've told you very much.

45:25

JW: Yes, I was just going to ask a few things about the interior of the building. It's very hard to remember where

rooms were. But I was going to ask about the library. Do you remember going into the library? Was it downstairs or upstairs?

LH: It seemed to me it was downstairs. Of course it was not the library, the library as such as it is now. ... We didn't have tape recorders and all the audio visual, no opaque projectors, nothing like that. There were a great many magazines called, "The Canadian Teacher" ... to which we were asked to subscribe. And it was filled, it was something like our "Prime Areas" magazine now. Have you seen that? The "Prime Areas", put out by the B.C. Primary Teachers' Association. But it was filled with, it was just a small book of about ... ten, ten inches high and about half an inch thick, but it had all the grades ... seatwork. Great thing, seatwork in those ... days. If you had eight grades to teach, you had to have, have volumes of seatwork. And it saved us because some of the sheets you could pull out and put on the jelly pad at night, which you know about I'm sure and then hand to the student. You might only make two copies of it if you only had two in grade three and the arithmetic lesson and all the seatwork, work would be there. And the answers would be in the back of this magazine. And it came out once a month so it saved us a lot of work. "The Canadian Teacher." There were two magazines. I've forgotten what the other one was called. But ... it had a great many art ideas in it. But I, I thought this was a great saver because it had grammar exercises. And you didn't, when we went to our little schools, we were warned that we, perhaps we would not even had a blackboard. And what were you to do? So these saved a lot of time, these magazines.

JW: Were the books that were in the library, were they very helpful to you at all?

LH: Oh yes. Yes. There was "The Book of Knowledge" and ... the encyclopedias and ... great many textbooks and things which we could use. We were able to borrow them and take them out, take them to our various schools. There wasn't any resource centre as such as, as they have now. ... Supplementary books, you couldn't borrow sets of supplementary books the way you can now. You can go up to see Peggy Lawson now as you know and borrow two or three sets on your sponsor teacher's card and then just arrive at the school with all these beautiful books. But nothing like that.

JW: Were you encouraged to purchase books for your own use?

LH: Yes. We all started a picture file which I kept right up until I retired in 1972. And then I left it at the school. But we started it at normal school. Saved all the magazines, the old ... "Saturday Evening Post" with their beautiful front covers, and ... mounted them, kept them and used them all the years. Just re-mounted them. They never grew old. We were also encouraged to keep a quote book which I kept until I retired. Little tiny, four-line poems, especially if you were going in to primary work, four-line poem to put on the board for children to print and illustrate. And if you had a quote book and just looked through the different seasons, you had them at, had the poem at your fingertips. And this was taken in and marked by Miss Riddell. Mm hmm [yes].

JW: Hmm [yes].

LH: So they, they really started us out, although we were green, we grew. I felt we grew. Dr. Campbell, Dr. MacLaurin, each one had his or her own purpose to teach methods and the academic knowledge which went along with it. So especially in mathematics ... Dr. Campbell was very helpful and then Hugh Farquhar took over from him.

50:27

JW: When you came back down to Victoria and did you and were teaching here, did you have occasion to meet these instructors again as they came out to do [inaudible crosstalk]?

LH: Oh yes. Yes. I worked with Hugh last for the last few years, in the Alumni Association when he was president. So it was very interesting. And Dr. Campbell came around when he was superintendent of schools in Victoria, came around to George J. School [George Jay Elementary School] and Victoria West where I was teaching. And we'd had many a laugh, the things which happened. My brother followed me at the normal school and he ... he was checked many times on the type of sweater he was wearing, they were very fussy about your dress. No jeans, no slacks and you had to have your seams straight and your stockings and so on. They were very fussy. You had to be a model. So he left with Dr. Campbell one day and said, "Dr. Campbell do you remember the day you came in and said, 'McCall,' you called me out to the cloakroom and you said, 'McCall that's not the appropriate sweater to wear' ", in front of his class. So it's interesting. And I feel we have

progressed from those rigid days. Teachers are trained now at the College of Education ... to be more informal, to be more ... familiar with the students. There isn't that great gap.

JW: When you were teaching, you taught right through didn't you.

LH: Oh yes. No I took nine years out to have my three children.

JW: I was wondering about that because at one point it was expected for a woman to retire when she got married.

LH: Well you didn't retire, you just left. You were automatically off the payroll. And when I was married in 1939, I ... I was just informed I was no longer. I didn't even get a letter, I just took it for granted. Yes, no longer with the Victoria School Board. They would send you a letter thanking you very much for your services. But they didn't say your services are terminated ...

JW: Was it difficult to get back into teaching then after those times?

LH: I was fortunate to get back just after the War [World War II] and then I bought back for my pension the nine years. I was fortunate, yes.

JW: Cuz once you were married it was pretty difficult to get in again wasn't it.

LH: Mm hmm, yes. I was hired as a, a music teacher and then branched out. So you had to really be specialized. ... Sergeant Major Bains [Bain] ... and Dr. MacLaurin said that the best thing to do is to pick out one subject you liked and to pursue it. So most of us followed his advice and it, it paid off. Yes.

JW: You were encouraged to specialize.

LH: Yes. Oh yes. So that was interesting. It was hard to get back. ... In fact the year I got back they hired some and then they let some of them out because they didn't have the classes for them. And when I came down from Bednesti School there were five teachers ... hired in September and at Christmas time they were laid off. So that would be 1933-34. Even in those days the girls were taught separately from the boys. Girls' Central School was a big red brick building where the Central, Junior Central [Central Junior Secondary School] is now. And the Boys' Central School with a big board fence between. Yes.

JW: Well when you were at the normal school there was a girl's entrance and a boy's entrance wasn't there?

LH: That's right, yes. Yes. We didn't line up to go in, nothing like that. But we had to go in separately, yes. How different now. I think for the better. Yes.

JW: You mentioned going into Dr. MacLaurin's office. I was just wondering if you can remember anything about that office. I understand there was a big fireplace in there.

LH: I c ... It had a huge fireplace, that's all I remember ... similar to the Victoria College. ... Have you been in the ... in the ... Craigdarroch Castle? Well they had a big stone fireplace on the left-hand side with a little curved door and that was Percy Elliot's room. So you have an Elliot Building next to the Young Building now. But if we were called there for any misdemeanor or if our grades were poor we'd have to go through this little door and then meet Dr., Mr. Elliot. But Dr. MacLaurin's office was similiar. He had pictures of his family around and a big bookcase with books. But we were very timid. We didn't take our eyes away ...

55:58

JW: How often ... you, you, oh you said you went out every Friday to be in classes teaching and you also had a, one of your instructors or was it the same one or a different instructor come each time, to evaluate you?

LH: Yes. A different one. Yes. If you were, I was now I've forgotten with whom our, or it's Mr. English. ... He would come out and then they seemed to circulate around to the different, various schools and then they would do the evaluation. And you'd get a copy of it. But you were not called into consultation the way they are now. The evaluators now, or facilitators as they call them sometimes ... evaluate with the student and the sponsor teacher

present. But nothing like that. It was a report ... sent to you or you were called into the, into the office and given the report. And you read it first and then discussed it. But there was, there wasn't the three-way. There was a great difference.

JW: And you found that the criticism given you was ... quite constructive.

LH: Oh yes. Yes. And we weren't given a chance to change it as they are now. It was final. And ... of course that was your grade. And you were given that grade and it went down to the Department as to how you passed and what your diploma was.

JW: Hmm.

LH: Your grading.

JW: That made a, a difference didn't it.

LH: Hmm [yes]. It made a difference. We had a, a man who looked after all the vacancies in the province, a Mr. Watson. Have you heard of a Mr. Watson? And of course when we went, we would go to look for a position he would give us the vacancies available in the province. And we would write to them but it came through Mr. Watson. There wasn't the advertising in the papers the way there is now. And you'd hear by word of mouth or by, from ...someone who was a friend of someone else in the school board just as I told you that's the only reason I got my certificate, my first position way up in the wilds of British Columbia. ... In those days they also had, it was the ... Tolmie government and they hired a Miss Lottie Bowron. She would come up to the normal school and talk, we had her talk to us or speak to us in the Literary Society meetings about the conditions in the various districts, in the school districts ... and what we were to be aware of.

JW: So she prepared you too.

LH: Yes, Miss Lottie Bowron. And it, she was very, very good. She was an older lady. ... She had been a private secretary to one of the premiers of the province. And then she was hired by the Tolmie government because one of the teachers, at Isle Pierre had been murdered and that was just very close to me. So when I went to my first school my father phoned her and asked her to go up and preview the situation at Bednesti. She arrived, she was very pleasant. She passed the situation and said I was in a good situation. But they were very cognizant of the situations in the different schools. And I, I have an idea it all came through Dr. MacLaurin. He looked after his students. You weren't thrown out to the wolves.

JW: You were very well prepared.

LH: Yes. Yes. And looked after. She would make a recommendation if the situation was not good. And then you would be shifted. You'd be asked to move to another school and that district might not have a, might not have a teacher. So she had a great deal of weight.