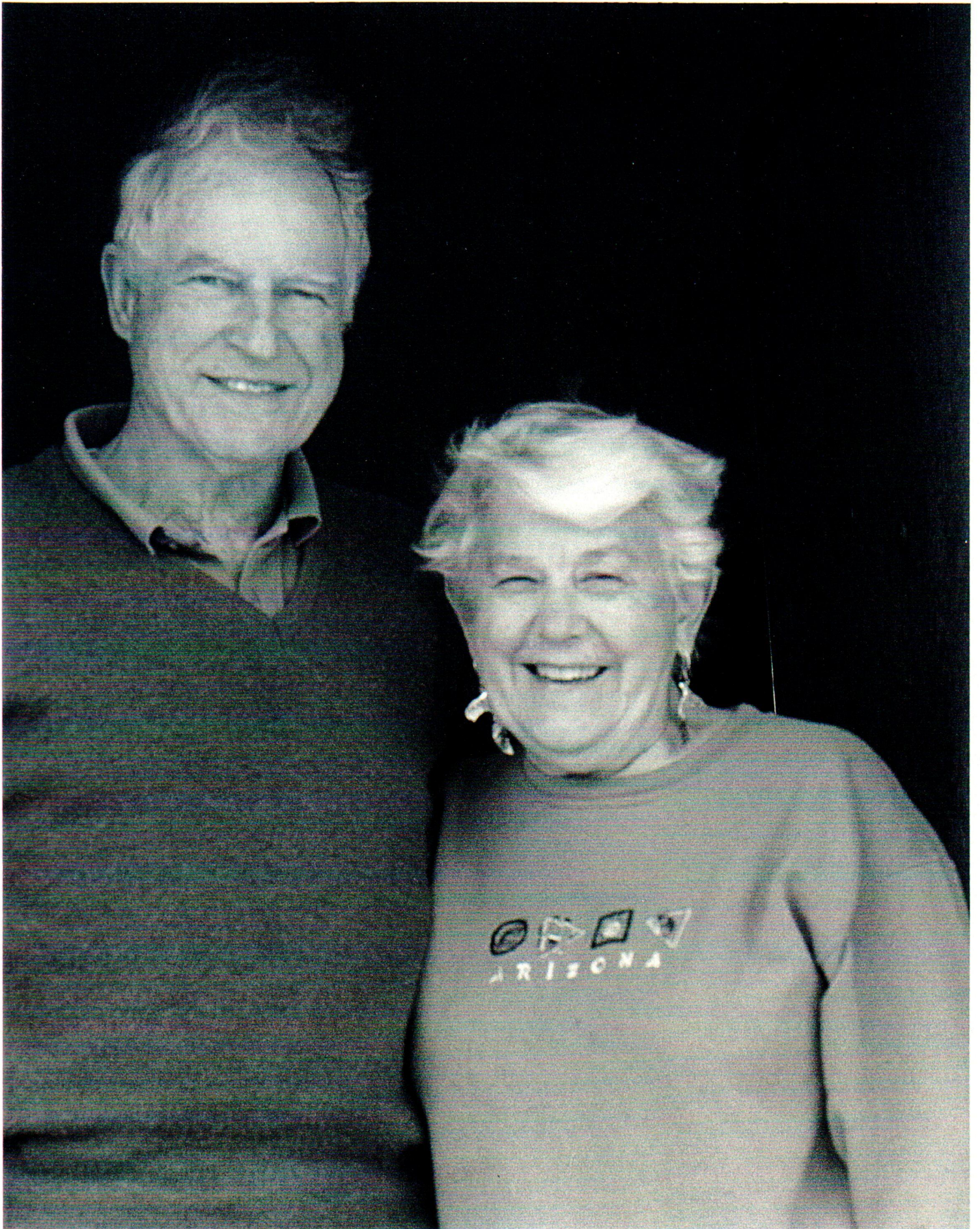


ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
WITH
ADA AND ROBERT HALLBERG

FOR
THE LOG HOUSE MUSEUM

1999

By
JonLee Joseph



Ada and Robert
Hallberg
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ADA AND ROBERT HALLBERG

Interviewed by: JonLee Joseph
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- Ada: I was born in Swedish Hospital August 6, 1924 and came with mother to our home at 2613 Marine Ave. and stayed there most of the time until I was married in 1948. I grew up with my grandmother Bowden, my mother Grace Mary Bowden Woodhouse, my dad, my brother Neal born 1917, and my sister Nancy born 1929. All of my life we had British stories which was the easiest way to know that my grandmother was British. My mother drove and took grandmother to the British American and the Daughters of Saint George and we saved and sent bundles to England. So I felt that British background. She was born in a place called Kings Lynn, I think. She was eighteen when she came to this country. Leaving a nice family and I don't know what her reasoning was at that time. She was a seamstress and a milliner and had some training when she was twelve years old. She had been sent to Paris for some training. I think she liked that work very much. She worked for a family later back in England and she felt proud to be with them. Maybe that is why she came to America, I don't know. But she came to America and first she went to Cleveland where some friends were and later came to the Pacific Northwest. So she was married in Tacoma, Washington and then their first and only child was born here in 1901 and that was my mother, Grace Woodhouse. They lived on Queen Anne Hill, but Alki was a popular place in the summer and they came out and they camped on the Beach. That was their first association with Alki. Soon after their first child was born who was a boy, my big brother. They decided it was a wonderful place for children to be raised and they moved to Alki. Then my grandfather, my grandmother and my father and my mother all came to Alki in that fashion. So that's my maternal genealogy as much as I think is interesting. Is that the kind of thing you are interested in?
- JonLee: It's just to acknowledge where you come from in terms of ancestry and what brought your family to this particular area, of all places of the world.
- Ada: They came at the time of the Seattle fire in 1889. My grandpa Bob and my mother's father was a carpenter and builder of homes and he was very, very proud of his work. His daughter,

JonLee: my mother was so proud of his work, she'd always show me how well the work was finished.

Ada: So he actually went up to the Port Townsend area which was very thriving and that's where he began and later came to Seattle. You see my father's family did something like this but not the trip from England in that manner. My father was British also and he had a father who had several brothers and one sister. The brothers, most of the brothers came to this country in the mid of the 1800's and they were masonry workers.

Robert: In the old country they owned coke mills and limestone mills and they were

Ada: That's what my grandfather did when he came here and he stopped in Troy, New York which is the town where they did the similar things in this country. He heard about the West and I

JonLee: think he had a pioneer spirit, everything I knew of him and I knew him very well too, came to

Ada: this part of the country. They lived for awhile, when my mother was born, they were

JonLee: neighbors. They became very good friends, played cards every night and their son was just a

Ada: couple of years older than my mother. So they stayed here and didn't go anywhere except

JonLee: here after that. My mother was just a little girl when her family went back to Cleveland. It was

Ada: just going to be more money for them to go to Cleveland and live and raise Grace their only child. So that's what they did, but they kept up this friendship with their pioneer friends.

Those pioneer friends included the family of the man my mother finally married, John Woodhouse. That's the connection, we're pretty British except my grandmother Woodhouse

JonLee: who was the wife of William Woodhouse, my grandfather. She was Welsh. There seems to

Ada: be the only difference I seem to find. But that's where we were when they came to this part of the country. They both came about the same time.

JonLee: Let's continue with you Ada, talking about that you grew up down here.

Ada: Yes, I lived at Alki on Marine Avenue which is Alki near the play field which is sort of in a way, that's the Alki. That's where the pioneers landed and that's where a lot of the live part of the community was for the people who came here to visit. But in this area where we lived today has always been more of a residential area. But before that time, there were farms down here. It was a landing place for the Mosquito Fleet.

JonLee: Do you remember the farms?

Ada: No, The farms disappeared in 1903 or 06' before I was born.

JonLee: Do you remember the Mosquito Fleet that pulled in many places?

Ada: No, (that was ten years before I played on the beach). Carroll Street, right where that restaurant is. It used to be Esthers Store. I have written quite a bit about that park. Yes it is where the Mosquito Fleet came in and the first school in Alki was there on that vacant lot in 1906. There were a lot of interesting things down there and I got carried away and looked into quite a few of them. The Copp home is one of them because of the family, the large family who did so many things in the community. It turned out that I had gone to school and was a good friend of the granddaughter. When Florence and I figured this out, she sent me a lot of information about family and what they had done in that location.

JonLee: Do they still have descendants in this area?

Ada: Yes they do. I can direct you to them if you would like me to.

JonLee: So did you go to Alki Elementary?

Ada: I went to Alki School, my brother, sister and cousins.

JonLee: Did you go to James Madison?

Ada: Yes I went to James Madison, then I graduated from Highschool here in West Seattle in 1942. And Bob went to all of these schools, but he started out a little differently. Then he went to Holy Rosary School and he went to Lafayette. He came down here to Alki as fast as he could. He did get into elementary school here.

JonLee: Do you have some memories of the Natatorium or Luna Park?

Ada: Yes, Bob lived in the Natatorium. But I have other memories then when he was living there because I was going to the Natatorium, my sister worked there. All of us around Alki in the days that the Natatorium was there which was 1936 until 1950? My mother didn't like me to swim there because Polio was still rampant when I was a youngster and one of the places they felt you got that was swimming pools. Besides I was taught to swim in the bay. I liked the Sound. There were wonderful lifeguards down there, they taught us to swim, they taught us to do life saving and they were really nice young men who were working their way through college. One of them became a recreational leader of some note.

JonLee: Right down by the Art Studio?

Ada: Yes, there used to be three rafts out there. There was always a lifeguard in a boat and one in the tower. A lot of my best friends and I used to swim all day long in the summer. But when the Natatorium came in, of course that was very popular and they had some great swimmers down there.

Bob: You should mention that you just had lunch with those girls that she used to pal around with.

Ada: Yes, we get together every other month or so, about six to eight of us who used to go swimming down there at Alki. So we like to remember those days and it was interesting when we first started to get together, it was really very intriguing because we knew who were, where we came from and we just began taking off from where we had been together. At first I thought it was very unusual experience, but now it has become very usual where you just pick up the next chapter of your life together. I like that, it happens with very good friends.

JonLee: Can I catch up with you? Do you want to be called Bob or Robert?

Bob: Bob is OK. You want to know how I got here?

JonLee: How you got here and just a little of your genealogy too, because that's your ancestors.

Bob: My daddy was born in St. Louis and he and his sister were raised there. Then he was in the service in the First World War. When the war was over, he went to work for the Milwaukee Railroad which is now defunct. He worked for the Vice President of the railroad and the Vice President traveled the full length of the road. He was in charge of all bridges and tunnels and culverts. At any rate everything relating to the road map. Slides, washouts, those were all his responsibility and so when there was some kind of an accident or disaster on the main line or a natural disaster, he would go there and supervised or at least initiated repairs. My dad was his secretary and he liked that life when he met the daughter of the Road Master of the railroad in Deer Lodge and the Road Master was transferred to Tacoma to take over the Pacific Division and so daddy followed this family out to Tacoma to continue his wooing. He and my mother married and moved to Dash Point and that's where I spent the first six years of my life. Then my dad had left the railroad and just I think only worked for a couple of years for a bank when the depression hit and the bank laid off some of the employees and my dad was among them. So even though I was too young to understand what this meant, Seattle seemed to be doing better than Tacoma in that period so my dad came to Seattle hoping that

there would be better job opportunities here. It did become the job with the Alaska Steamship Company after one week. I'd like to tell the story about that week of job hunting because it's unbelievable to me. Money was so tight that he came over here with just his Ferry bill which I understand you take the Indianapolis or the Tacoma from Tacoma and come to Seattle and he came on a Monday morning. He caught the very first boat and then he stayed at the YMCA. I think he told me that it was a dollar a night to stay at the YMCA and with his ferry fare and his lodging at the YMCA, he had 35 Cents a day left to eat on. So he could buy a great big bag of peanuts for 35 Cents or he could buy a bag of peanuts and a cup of coffee. But at any rate that's what he lived on for a whole week, just peanuts and his daily cup of coffee. But he found a job and did very well. The company liked him enough so they hired me when I got out of highschool and was going to the University and I worked for Les Costeen in the summer tourist season before the war began. When the war came on, Les Costeen was very helpful in getting me an appointment with the United States Merchant Marine Academy. I went back and graduated from the Academy and sailed on their ships.

I want to tell a story about when we came to Seattle because we left Dash Point and my brother and I thought Dash Point was paradise because we had all of this wonderful driftwood on the beach and we had a great dock. The steamers used to come to that dock and drop off passengers and the Mosquito fleet went from downtown Tacoma to Browns Point first, then Dash Point and then a little town called Lakota and then it kicked over to Quarter Master Harbor on Vashon Island. I don't think it had any stops on the West side of Vashon Island but then it went around Warm Springs Bay. It made several stops on Vashon before it returned to Tacoma. My brother and I loved the beach. My mother, even though I was just six and Dick was four, never had any anxiety about us. It was just a safe place to let your kids out of the house in the morning and leave them down at the beach most of the day and we had lots of play friends. I thought that I would be miserable in Seattle. Dad chose to come here to Alki where he found a home for us. He drove down Admiral Way and I think Dick and I must have just been sulking in the back seat of the car even though it was a gorgeous day, feeling very sorry for ourselves and suddenly when we reached the top of the Lander, here was this sparkling bay with white caps on it and we could look down and much of that area just from

Lander down to Schmitz Park bridge was still open. There were only a few homes in there, big old homes. We looked down, we couldn't believe it, because we looked down there and here was this wonderful bathhouse recreation center with three rafts bobbing in front of it and hundreds of people. We heard the squeals and children, way up the street when my dad turned on 60th The house was only one block from the beach. Pretty neat place and we could hardly wait to get out of the car and race down to that tide flat and then down to the beach to find that there were two rafts close enough to shore so that little kids who could just dog paddle, could reach them. My little brother (I don't think he was dog paddling yet) could wade out to them. There were many stages of the tide going out and you could get out there and sit on that raft or lie on it and look down in the water. Then when you got bigger, you could go out in the deep water raft with a tower that you could dive off of. The tower to me looked like it must be thirty feet tall. Later when I looked at it, it was hardly even a tall mans height.

Ada: It was taller then that father, oh yes much taller.

Bob: It was a great memory. Another interesting thing about those rafts were that in the fall when you went back to school, there was a day announced (I don't know how people passed the information on) but all of us kids going to Alki grade school knew that this was the day that the Park Department brought the draft horses to the beach to pull in the rafts for the winter. I don't know if the teachers let us out of school to see that. I can remember several years being down there on hand and the Park Department employees didn't work on Saturday or Sunday, so this meant that it was a school day and the teachers were kind enough to let us out and it was called a field trip to go down and watch those two huge draft horses inch those log rafts up the beach.

JonLee: Did they swim out and put lines on them?

Bob: I can't remember any of the details, but somehow the raft was so constructed that you could put tie lines on. Of course they waited for a high tide, that would be a critical thing so they got as much help from the tide as possible.

Ada: This fits perfectly as you reminisce about the rafts everybody loved those rafts. Most of us learned to swim down there and worked up from one raft to the next and we were always protected by those lifeguards. It was in the early fifties and there was a meeting called at the

Rec Center there by the school. So I went over and we were going to talk about the beach and they had taken the rafts away. What had happened to the rafts was up for discussion that evening and I didn't know that half of Alki had moved back to Alki. I thought I was the only one over there determined to save the rafts. Well, we couldn't save them. The Park Department was there and they told us they were afraid that someone would hurt themselves diving off the rafts at low tide and injuring their head. Someone got up (this was Gordon McDonald) and then he said, "Well then, they've learned something haven't they?". Gordon was always an outspoken person and rather determined. Phil Ceis was there and I was there and all kinds of people were there saying "Bring those rafts back"! Then they said they would. They would scrape the barnacles off of them, that was another thing of concern. So pretty soon if we didn't have the rafts, we wouldn't have the lifeguards. There would be a lone lifeguard there walking the beach. It was just a whole different scene.

JonLee: The rafts never did come back, did they? In 1952 when we lived here, they weren't here. I use to take the bus around and go on in to school. Remember the bus driver that tied flies? Paul Timbo and If you had your groceries, he would stop in front of your house. What a kind man he was.

Bob: I think the old timers think that something went wrong in the Park Department or communities relations with the Park Department. We had this wonderful field house that they tore down, converting to a barely adequate comfort station perhaps kind of a dressing room.

JonLee: Where was the Field House? Down where the Art Studio is now?

Bob: It's just one little section.

Ada: Tiny section. That whole section is where the lifeguard stored their things and had their first aid stuff. I may be exaggerating, it wasn't the whole section.

Bob: We had a bandstand, we had the most marvelous recreation center director, whatever they called Hess, But he was unique because something went on at that Field House every week.

JonLee: There were activities for kids, there were activity for adults. It was a great gathering for

people. If it was a rainy day, you could go in and play checkers or Parcheesi or croquette, all kinds of games.

Ada: This area where we played these games Bob is talking about was the top floor of the Field House towards the water. You would sit at these tables and the waves would be crashing in and there were doors on either side that went out to a walkway. Of course you weren't supposed to go out there, but there was always a little bit of a trick to get out there somehow. That was just the top part and then a broad stairway on either way.

Bob: But only one of them was used. You were discouraged from going up it because it ended up on the stage.

Ada: There was a stage where we had plays that the kids had put on. This was on the same floor as where we played games, but there were doorways between the auditorium which was big enough for a dance every Friday, was big enough for the plays that I'm talking about and we had teachers who were WPA who came out and taught us. I don't think we had to pay any money.

JonLee: This building must have been changed because I remember when I came in '52' I remember Easter Sunrise service on the west end of it but I don't remember it having that much space in it.

Bob: It was big enough to hold four patrols of scouts and they lined up four boys in front and four boys behind and four patrols. We all spread out and we played wonderful games and just had the most exuberant time. I started to say, there were two people in my life outside of my family who made great contributions to my growing up. One is this man Hess Viney. He was the recreation Director and he was a wonderful swimmer. He coached basketball, taught us how to play badminton, he was in charge of the lifeguards in the summer and also spent some time always out in the boats and on the beach. When the City acquired the old Natatorium, he moved over there and was in charge of the swimming program within that big Natatorium. He had a lot of impact on young people in that community.

JonLee: Ada said you lived above the Natatorium, when was that?

Bob: It was 1941, we moved in.

JonLee: Were there apartments above it?

Bob: Yes There was the owner's apartment and an apartment that had been occupied when the Nat was running by Chuck Nettleton who was the Engineer in charge of the Power Plant that

brought in the salt water. Both were very nice apartments and the man who had built the Natatorium, he and his wife occupied that until the Nat went broke. He took his life, we think under rather tragic circumstances. The story is that he dove into the pool so stressed by his financial problems. But whether that was the circumstances or not, it was all clouded in mystery in our young minds. We thought someone might have murdered him. Pushed him off the balcony.

Ada: That's what I still think. I think it very strongly.

Bob: These people Torkelson built the Natatorium, had some means when he started out, even though people knew the boiler room, they always said he bought junk from all over and it was not a properly engineered boiler room. At any rate, he had some means because on the backside of the Nat, they built a boat house which about 30 feet long and they had their motor launch in there. They had some balance so they could lower it down to the water. Then the apartment itself even though it had the most garish bathroom you conceive of. It was a purple tiled bathroom, lavenders and purples, plums whatever you can think of. My mother despaired of ever finding curtains or anything else to make it a little less gaudy. It had two good size bedrooms. The bedroom that my brother and I slept in was quite large at least 20 x 30 feet. Then there was a great big livingroom. That was also 30 feet long with a spectacular view window wrapped all around this. You just sat there with the water lapping underneath. As a matter of fact it wasn't the most comfortable place to stay in the winter because logs would get in there underneath the piling and bang back and forth against those pilings. My dad was a small man, not really an outdoor man, so my brother and I would be awakened and we would be encouraged to go down and push those logs out. It's a good thing we were never crushed under there, I don't know how we did it. I can remember getting up in the dark of night maybe midnight or maybe it was one or two o'clock in the morning. If the tide was in there and there was a big log just rolling up against the pilings and how they worked themselves in between the pilings took a lot of pushing. We'd finally work them out and send them on their way down the beach and then go back in. I'm sure mom had hot cocoa to warm us up because it was cold.

JonLee: Did you have a wood stove?

Bob: No, they had what you call a circulating oil heater. Just a little small contained furnace but it had a fan blower that blew the air the full length of the apartment and it's true that our bedroom on the back side wasn't very warm. The bathroom had electric coil heaters built in the wall, at least that's what I remember. It had a big sky light and as long as you had daylight, it was a bright and cheery place. That was the entrance through the sunroom. It was a pleasant place.

JonLee: Did you move there because of hard times?

Bob: No we moved there because everybody in Alki was half provoked at the Park Department for letting the Natatorium run down. The Park Department made some sort of an excuse, "Well we can't afford caretakers". My father was an officer in the community Club and he said, "You can rent the apartment. We would be glad to rent it to live there and you'll make some income and you will have caretakers ". There were two apartments and the city, I don't know what happened but I guess who ever was there kind of buffering this thing keeping the citizens placated said, "Well if you find a good citizen". My dad stepped up and said, "I'd be glad to move in there". The rent was right, it was \$32.00 for an apartment today would be two or three thousand dollars to live out over the water.

JonLee: Probably more than that, it's all relative. When I first started teaching in 1966 in Port Townsend, I had a little beach house for \$35.00, a little cottage.

Bob: It was a great place to live. I went to the U' that Fall, I went through rushing. A couple of the fraternities sent people out, (they would come to your home sort of to look you over to make sure you washed your neck or something) they came up to this Natatorium and most of the guys, there were three of them, I never corrected the impression they had that we owned it.

Ada: My thought would be, I was going with him but I wasn't as old as he so I wasn't really understanding of what fraternities were about. When I did understand it, I thought he must have felt really crummy bringing them out here to this broken down building. But he turned it around, even in his own mind he turned it around and he pretended that he owned it.

Bob: Well it wasn't quite so bad right then, it was a few years later that the windows started getting broken and it fell into disrepair and the city just wouldn't spend any money on it. It could have been a grand facility.

Ada: Are you sure? I thought it had all this really cheap.....

Bob: It had a lot of bad plumbing in it. The boiler room was the part that was so phony but the pools were great, they didn't crack up.

JonLee: When you lived there did you have access to the pools?

Bob: No, only a few times did the city heat up the system and they a little half hearted effort they were going to open it up and they brought an engineer in and got the boiler room fired up and the water heated and it looked like they were going to operate. I think the war sort of interfered that it was just too expensive to get help and get the repairs that needed to be made were probably going to be too expensive toward economy. So it just deteriorated more and more.

JonLee: What fraternity did you pledge?

Bob: Theta Chi. I never told them the truth. The first two weeks after I pledged, one of the (I think he was my pledge captain) came out to visit us and we must have made a reasonably good impression sitting up there looking out over the bay in this palatial owner's apartment. He was telling some of the other members, "Oh yeah, Bob has four pools at his home".

JonLee: You just let it stand. How did you and Ada meet?

Bob: We only lived for or five doors apart. I lived in the Nat. and she lived two houses up the street. We saw each other, but she was a couple of years behind me in school so there wasn't much romantic interest until the summer after I graduated from high school. The little church put on a play in the young peoples group. I had been going to these what we call, "Pilgrim Fellowship" at that time. Attending high school kids group and they put on a play and Ada was in the play and she was such an impressive girl. The interesting thing was (we kid about this), she was a poor actress. Her hands and arms were so stiff and she was so conscious of her posture on the stage, she was ramrod straight and she had this piddling little job as the maid, wasn't it? She only had a few lines. My heart went out to this poor little girl who was so terrified on that stage and I went through the rehearsals and saw her and was just enamored with this creature that was dying.

JonLee: How old were you then?

Ada: I was probably sixteen.

JonLee: And how old were you Bob?

Bob: Eighteen. So any way we both lived in the same neighborhood, so we walked home together with other kids and pretty soon it seemed like a good idea to invite her somewhere so I invited her to a fraternity dance or something, what was it?

Ada: It was a dance.

Bob: Did we go to that dance or did your mother scotch it?

Ada: No, my mother thought it was fine but I was terrified. She went down and bought me a new dress and I sweated so much and none of those deodorants worked in those days. It was really something. It was a nice crepe dress with some gold frogs on it and my mother bought a nice quality thing whenever we bought it, but we didn't things very often. That's how important it was and she thought I would look nice. But I couldn't stop sweating.

JonLee: You were nervous?

Ada: Yes! I was to young too go to those fraternity dances. But nobody else seemed to get my terrible anxiety except my sweat glands.

Bob: I don't thing we dated one-on-one, it was always with a group of kids or chaperones and maybe if we went to the theater there would be five or six of us that would walk up to the theater.

Ada: I really blanked it out, I think. I don't know what I did at the dance. I shutter to think.

JonLee: You probably danced and came home and was relieved when he said, "good night". Except that you liked him, right?

Ada: Yes.

Bob: Oh yes, she believed everything I said.

Ada: I can tell you what he really told me. It would make no difference to me what he had when I really fell in love with Bob. But he told me he had a white convertible. Why would I believe such a thing? Well there was a white convertible that someone did own down here on Beach Drive at the end there at that great big home worth several million dollars. This was down there at the end of Erskine and Beach Drive, anyway they did own a white convertible and I did not know that, so I had seen this white convertible around the beach and I didn't know who it belonged to. As a matter of fact, I wasn't interested in getting into anybody's white

convertible, I didn't care. When Bob told me he had the white convertible, it didn't really impress me. But I thought for about two years that somewhere there was a white convertible even though I had never seen it with him.

Bob: It was always in the garage.

JonLee: Why did you tell tales?

Bob: I don't know, but she was so gullible and she believed everything I said, I think I just started these little stories and kept embellishing them. One time I was working for a very nice gentleman, working for the owner of an ad agency and we weren't married yet. He had a Chrysler convertible, very nice convertible. So I borrowed it one night to impress my girlfriend, drove up in front of her house. Instead of saying I had the bosses car, let's go for a ride, I told her, "What do you think of my new car"? Even her mother came out to look at this car and I think her mother must have been a little anxious because here was about (in to days money) thirty, forty thousand dollars worth of car sitting out there. Really top of the line. We went for a ride and I was so unfamiliar with the car, I had driven out while it was still daylight and I couldn't find where to turn on the lights. We were driving along Avalon Way and the police pulled me over and told me that my lights were out. I thought they had found out that I don't really own this car and that I'm probably not a good driver. I didn't know what I had done wrong, I thought I must have gone through a stop sign. The minute he said "Your lights aren't on", and he took the flashlight and put it down on the dash board to where the lights switch was and I reached over and turned them on, he waved me off.

JonLee: How long did you court before you married?

Ada: You have to subtract World War Two when he was gone, so I suppose it would be six years. It was a longer courtship than any of my friends had. We started going together in 42' I think We got married in 48'.

JonLee: Your propensity for imagination in story telling probably stood you in very good stead for public relations and advertizing.

Bob: I've been accused of that all right.

JonLee: I'm thinking of using it in terms of advertising because you want to appeal to people so that they feel that they are driving it with the wind blowing through their hair and the smell of the

JonLee: what ever season it is. In convertibles you smell and in cars you don't smell so much, the land scape, when there are lilacs in bloom and things like that. Motorcycles do the same thing.

Ada: I have to tell you, it's really interesting and one of the reasons I enjoy doing this with you, I never dreamt it would be so much fun or so relaxing - or so revealing. Because what has happened here is you have really revealed about Bob, he's a wonderful story teller and when that spook house was at the field house, it was never worse or more frightening then when he was there with a cat-o'-nine-tails with his shirt stripped down and a head coming out of the floor, a human head coming out of the floor. It was awful. A description in detail of the old spook house. Much scarier than would be allowed today.

Ada: I meant to tell you though that seriously he tells wonderful bull stories and is in demand by his children and now by his children's children. To tell this particular story. He is good, he is very good. So that's why I don't know a whole lot about him, he tells so many stories.

JonLee: I had wanted to ask you when we got together at the park, we were talking briefly about another subject, about the depression and how that was for your families and how they lived. What kept them going? What inner faiths kept each of your families going?

Ada: I was very lucky. I was a very sensitive youngster and I was aware of the fact that there were people all around us who were hungry. Our family had a job, my dad had a job all the way through the depression, he had a good job and he had a car. Now that was very unusual, I didn't realize it at first but later when I understood about the depression and what was happening around us, I knew we were very lucky. Of course my clothes were always handed down or worn for a long time and those kind of things that happened in the depression were like my older brother said, "Well, we were poor but you didn't know it". Because I think it is because we weren't that poor. We had something to eat and I think other people experienced it much worse than I did. There were different days when you didn't have macaroni and cheese. When we had macaroni and cheese and I got one bit of cheese in there, that was wonderful, but was that terrible? No, I never thought of it as being terrible. I still make macaroni and cheese like that for my kids.

JonLee: I wanted to ask you about your family and how they lived during the depression and what kept them going?

Bob: I don't know how my mom and dad survived that. I think we were fortunate too, aside from that week that dad was out of work at least it was always week as we talked about it. Then he had a salary and it wasn't a big salary, but I know my mother worked very hard to keep up appearances. She liked to dress somewhat spectacularly. Would that be a good way to describe my mother? She could take somebody else's dress and redesign it and throw a sash around it or change something and then she would kind of be a band box and it was a challenge to her. If she was invited to a luncheon, she always entered dramatically and timed her entrance as though we had some money and though these clothes were right off of I. Magnin's racks. A friend of ours, she had been a friend of our mothers, she was a dear person and we continued to see her until her death in her mid seventies. Mrs. Donald and she would tell us about my mother and the PTA ladies couldn't believe my mother because my mother was somewhat like the lady in the TV Show "Keeping Up Appearances". At the PTA Mothers Club (I think it was called then) the ladies had a luncheon at school in conjunction with some kind of activity or maybe they just had a Spring lunch. Then my mother would simply elbow the other ladies out of the way because she was the one who knew how to set the table and she would bring her lace tablecloth and we didn't have any sterling, but she would bring our silver plate up and she would bring sugar and creamers etc. and she would make the center piece. I kind of think of her as Mrs. Bouquet, you know, "Keeping Up Appearances". She didn't go anywhere, she wouldn't go out and pick up the paper on the front porch, until she had had her bath and makeup and if she wasn't dressed to go down town or to go somewhere, she was dressed in some freshly ironed housecoat. By God, her kids didn't get to go to school unless their shirts were clean and their underwear was in apple pie order so they could go to the hospital if struck by a car.

Ada: One thing about your mother, Bob and stories on PTA. They were having a picnic in Schmitz Park (the park was used a lot in those days), she took her candle sticks to the Park. I was told that they were silver candle sticks that she set in the Park

(Missed rest of sentence due to change of tapes)

Bob: My mother would never go without hose and high heels.

Ada: I know why. But at that time it's like Johnny saying that it's a 'code' because when I think of it and my children were in elementary school and it was PTA, you wore hose and giraffe. I put on hose every I put on heels, put on whatever went with it and I didn't wear a hat and gloves, but I did wear a hat and gloves when I went on the 37 bus to downtown and I did that for quite a while and when I didn't do it anymore, I was very relieved.

Jon Lee: That 'code' is still in existence. I taught in Hawaii six years ago and one of the old Hawaiian women volunteered at the Palace in Kona. She was an interpreter and a guide. I didn't wear hose, I was teaching in Hawaii. It was too hot to me. She was wearing hose and she thought that women who were properly dressed should wear hose.

Bob: I've been to Kona. But in the square in front of Lanihale Palace Hotel, (I suppose just during the tourist season) we used to go to those band concerts and the old timers, the true Hawaiian women, but some of them were of mixed blood who looked more Caucasian than Hawaiian, there were always one or two rows of these ladies dressed in black with their tight knit black hats, a distinctive style and they were the only ones. You'd never find a hat like that in this part of the world. They all had them. They were dressed as if they had just come out of a nursery.

Jon Lee: I wanted to ask you, what keeps you both in West Seattle? I know that your family's came here but you stayed here. Your children have moved back here, some of them.

Ada: Well, I didn't meet a man to do that, but I left home to go to college. I really was very anxious to get out of home. Sometimes I think why did I want to leave so much because I didn't have a problem in my home that drove me out like I know later that many of my friends did. I didn't have any terrible need to get away. But I certainly had that feeling. I wanted to go. I had to find a college that would take me away from Seattle. I had to earn my own way because during those days when it was hard going, there was no saving of money except one thing I had, a twenty five dollar War Bond and I remember my mother was so happy to come and sit beside me on my bed and say, "I just wish we had more Ada". Then I had my grandmother to whom college meant you must have a skirt, nice blouse, a suit with matching hat, purse, gloves and shoes and now you can go to college. My grandma bought me a dress coat. Not

Bob: My mother would never go without hose and high heels.

Ada: I know Bob, but at that time it's like Johnny saying that it's a 'code' because when I think of it and my children were in elementary school and it was PTA, you wore hose and girdle. I put on hosiery, I put on heels, put on whatever went with it and I didn't wear a hat and gloves, but I did wear a hat and gloves when I went on the 37 bus to downtown and I did that for quite a while and when I didn't do it anymore, I was very relieved.

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JonLee: I wanted to ask you, what keeps you both in West Seattle? I know that your family's came here but you stayed here. Your children have moved back here, some of them.

Ada: Well I didn't make a plan to do that, but I left home to go to college. I really was very anxious to get out of home. Sometimes I think why did I want to leave so much because I didn't have a problem in my home that drove me out like I knew later that many of my friends did. I didn't have any terrible need to get away. But I certainly had that feeling. I wanted to go. I had to find a college that would take me away from Seattle. I had to earn my own way because during those days when it was hard going, there was no saving of money except one thing I had, a twenty five dollar War Bond and I remember my mother was so happy to come and sit beside me on my bed and say, "I just wish we had more Ada". Then I had my grandmother to whom college meant you must have a skirt, nice blouse, a suit with matching hat, purse, gloves and shoes and now you can go to college. My grandma bought me a dress coat. Not

velvet, but like a corduroy, but it was a dress coat and a princess style and I was going to Washington State College. I had the idea that I could go to any college in this country that I wanted to. But the fact is, I couldn't. I didn't have enough money and my grades weren't very good. I was very, very naive about where I might go thinking I might get to go to one of the Ivy League Schools. Really ridiculous, but I went. I majored in Radio. That's why I went to Washington State. Washington State College had Radio and they had a big program. They had the best one on the West Coast other than areas in L.A. and I don't know how it happened but I had always been told by my mother, "Well you ought to get into radio". So I did, I was a Radio Major and it was great and I loved it.

JonLee: Did you get into radio?

Ada: Yes, that's where I worked then. I didn't have a big show. I had my one year there and then I transferred to the University and that was because Bob's ship was coming in. There was no other reason to go to the University because the University had nothing. I don't know if people believe me now because of course when they had TV, Washington State did not handle all that stuff. Anyhow I had a professor there who was blind and he was the main Radio professor, he was head of the department. He was wonderful and he was very definitely encouraging me and praising me and I felt a little bad not to continue there. Anyhow

JonLee: I transferred out here and why did I leave home? I still don't know why.

JonLee: Don't you think children need to find their own way separate identity, separate from their families? So that's part of it. It's easier to do if you aren't living in the same physical and psychic space.

Bob: No parent had a daughter who was more obedient, more loyal and more loving than Ada. Her mom and dad were just continually delighted that we would come to dinner on Sundays or spend a weekend with them and at different times as we were still trying to get me through school. We'd come back and live with her parents for a couple of months between a change of an apartment or something. You would think it was the greatest treat in the world for them to start feeding us and caring for us. They had a younger daughter at home, but there was something about your daddy, he was so proud of Ada and yet he was not a man who was demonstrative in terms of affection. When the occasion arose when he could tell someone

Ada: that his daughter was coming to dinner or his daughter had done this and that, you could just sense the pride in his voice.

Ada: Your question was why we stayed in West Seattle and the answer is - I don't know. Because when I came home from college and we were working, we had an apartment downtown for a while, (very hard to get apartments after the war) I liked the idea of being there and when we started looking for a permanent house because we were going to have a family, I thought we'd live in Bellevue because that's where all the people I was working with were headed East. Most of the people I knew at that time thought that would be a good place for Bob and me to look and we did. I didn't know that Bob wasn't paying any attention, I didn't know he was just being nice to the people to a view that was pointed out. There was a place just beginning called Beaux Arts and that was where I thought we would go. I don't know what happened to Beaux Arts because we came here.

Bob: When we brought our first child a boy, home to this little cottage forty-seven years ago. This was just the grandest place, the kids could play in the woods and that's what I had done when I was growing up. The kids go across the beach. There was a quarter of a mile of open beach there. Why would anyone want to go any place else? This was heaven. The other thing was we had already been back to Chicago and Davenport, Iowa.

JonLee: I wanted to go to another story that I read or heard . Pat Filer told me a bit and said to ask you about when you lived down at the beach at Alki do you remember the prostitutes who would come on their days off and stay at a house and then go to Ritchie's Drug store.

Bob: At the corner of 64th, there was an air of mystery about it. When I had delivered newspapers there, not on my own route but I was helping another boy who had that route. You never put that paper on the front porch or opened the front gate. The gate was always locked. There was a little newspaper receptacle in this huge hedge that surrounded the house and there was a mystery about that house. I thought from the things my mother had said that they were bootleggers in there.

Ada: Bootleggers and prostitutes all living together in a little corner of evil, right?

Bob: I don't know, she never used the word prostitute.

JonLee: I use that word because I was looking over "Ladies of the night".

Ada: No prostitute, I use that word too. But I just think that story is one of stories that is warped out of shape. Carl Shaw lives right next door to there and he doesn't think that anything like that happened there.

Bob: Oh, it's been recorded in the paper!

Ada: That's why they put the locks on and things because the newspaper article brought so many people out to pry on their private house.

Bob: You can clean it up anyway you want to, the fact was

JonLee: Was this in the forties?

Bob: The thirties mostly, but it could have extended into the forties because the article kind of exposed the whole thing to public view. It was owned by a very well known family in Seattle and rented to a madam who ran a house of prostitution in Alaska and down into Grays Harbor.

Ada: Wait a minute, what did you say about that? What was your first sentence?

Bob: I said this house was owned by a well known family in Seattle. I don't think it was sold til later.

Ada: Let me add a few things. The home was owned by a family in Alki who just had an ordinary big family and had this big house. The realtor who sold it didn't know who she was selling it to, but she had an opportunity to sell this home. The people who owned it didn't particularly know what was going on, they had moved, but she's still here. I don't know how to put this.....The realtor sold the house to a woman who turned out to be the madam of prostitutes who operated I think in Kelso or Aberdeen, Washington where prostitution was legal and she rented this house so she could bring them up here to the beach so they could have a relaxing time.

Bob: It was called a R` and R`, if it was a recreation facility. But, somebody else said and I'm inclined to believe this. The girls would get a social disease, they had to take them out of the line while they were treated. They came here. It would be worthwhile talking to Charlie Ritchie, Jr. to find out because I've often heard that Charlie use to send the medicine of whatever they were using to control venereal diseases. I had friends that lived down there on the beach and I can remember, I think on a Saturday or a Sunday, the man who had a

relationship to the madam who seemed to be the caretaker of this house. He was the guy who cut the lawn and trimmed the hedge and did the shopping.

Ada: How old were you now?

Bob: I think this would be fourteen or fifteen, 1937, 38', 39'. But I can remember walking down there and he had a very large touring car and I have this recollection, it was an open touring car. It had a top that went back, maybe that isn't true. Maybe that's just my imagination may have made that up. But I can remember the girls coming out of this home through the front gate where they had been secluded.

Ada: They had to become secluded, it wasn't originally like that.

Bob: Well it was when I was a boy. You had to peek there to see what was going on inside there through that cyclone fence behind which grew a laurel hedge. At any rate the girls came out and they were dressed just spectacular. They looked like movie stars and they all had hats and they had gloves up to their elbows and they were in silk print dresses. They looked fabulous. Somebody told me they were prostitutes. I thought, "My God, that's a wonderful profession, look at how nice they were dressed, look how beautiful they are". I just thought that's a pretty high calling, because they had their own chauffeur, he opens the door for them, he helps them into the car.

Ada: Where was your convertible parked on that day?

Bob: I was still in the bicycle stage.

JonLee: Well thank you for telling that and yet still protecting.

Bob: Well, I didn't start to.

Ada: The thing is I personally know that one of the families who have lived here forever, just would feel really bad.

JonLee: Then it's still protected. At some level prostitution is an occupation that takes two and it's a choice. In those days there were not so many choices for women. Not something you and I would have done. Just to look at it without a heavy judgement. So thank you for doing that.

I have one more question at this moment and that is from the time that you have lived, there's an essential amount of experience that you've had with life and a breadth. You have lived through war and depression, more than one war. What is it you would say is the most

the most important thing in life that you would pass on to your children and their children and children's children? I want to ask this of you both separately in life.

Ada: I would have to think about that.

Bob: Ada, you passed on to the girls a wonderful sense of - - they are so loving and so supportive of one another and of us. Our son has this too, his is a heavy handy kind of crashing through the door love. He wants to help. The girls are more subtle and they make little suggestions and wouldn't it be better if you did it this way or something like that. They all accommodate the other's idiosyncrasies. So I think you gave those kids a recognition of loyalty and love that we don't see in the children of many of our friends.

Ada: It's true, I have said that since all the girls have gone to various places and various times at a distance - Indonesia, India, Malaysia. They are all back now and I feel so lucky because I hear sometimes other parents saying, "Oh, my kids are bad" or something like that and it's wonderful because they are all caring people and I love them all and I am very happy and I feel fortunate

I'll tell you, you asked a question and I was trying to think. I can remember back when I was going to have children. "Here I am, I'm a parent". At the shower I had for my first son, a lot of my cousins were there, a large family I have and there were a lot of people there. They were giving me these presents and I said, "Well, what does a baby wear around the house"? That was how much I knew about a baby. So I learned as I went along that I was making quite a few mistakes, but I did think I did not want to force some kind of a religion on them. I did not want to say they had to go to Sunday School, they had to go to Church, they had to go to this Church. Bob is Catholic, I was Protestant, I didn't want to do that and I've never worried about the church. But I made that opportunity open to them when they did go, when they were old enough to go. I did want them to believe that there was a Spiritual Power in our lives that was very important to believe in. Because our bodies are not going to be here for ever. We know that. Spiritual World is very important to be a part of and I tell you that, but down some unusual roads including our son becoming a minister of some unknown church, but it didn't become a real part of his life where he was off on some church where people actually came. I think that's important. I think if you just think you are here today and gone

tomorrow and there is no Spiritual afterwards, well then that's harder to live with. I don't think it makes your decisions as desirable for other people. Also that physical things weren't so important. I used to have quite a few more nice cups and saucers and one day my young granddaughter (two or three years ago) wanted to look and take some out. I said, "Well sure you can". I was going to say "Just a minute and I'll show you how to be careful getting those out". Too late, her arms let them crash onto the floor. It happened they were some of the good ones so I just had to stop myself a minute and remind my own self. Well, it is a physical cup and that kind of thing, do you know what I mean? So you broke the window pane or you broke the platter, that's replaceable you know. You didn't do it on purpose, those are the only two things I can think of and what brought us back here to stay so long? I don't know why we stayed so long, I really don't know because a lot of the things that we enjoyed so much are not really available any more. One of things use to be the great freedom I had as a child. When I was a little girl and when I was a medium girl and a grown up girl, I had all the freedom of the beach day and night. There were no curfews, no curfews in the park, no curfews anywhere. We could build fires, the biggest fire on the beach and we could burn up all the logs on the beach. There was a whole different kind of living. There were rolling skating parties on the promenade or on the tennis court. Each Friday night, the nickelodeon playing for dancing down there. There was a great freedom. You could finish your work in the morning at the house and then take your lunch if you wished or whatever and go down to the beach and stay there all day and not get home until dinner time. Or you could go elsewhere. A lot of the play field activities, that's where we were. Mother didn't come looking for us every two hours and wondering if we were ok. Those kinds of things that we wanted for our children I think, don't you? Bob got to wander further away then I ever did. I didn't really care about wondering so far away from my home, so I didn't. But I did have all the freedom I wanted in this area and I liked it and I was proud of it. There are a lot of songs that little kids wrote about it when we were growing up and we use to sing them while going to town on the streetcar. Those are the things we wanted for our children. They were more important than the social strata that might be living somewhere else. I did think at one time it would be comfortable to live in the University District because there were a lot more

opportunity to go to school and I always liked going back to school. I could just run a few blocks and go to the University. But we didn't do that and I think the kids are all glad we grew up here.

Bob: I started to say a long time ago about this recreation director, Hess Viney and then I happened to mention another man who had a lot of impact on my life. His name was J. L. Morrow, he was actually christened Richard but for some reason they called him J.L.M.. He was my Scout Master and he provided just wonderful adventures for us young boys, camping, hiking, mountain climbing, skiing and then just teaching you. He told wonderful stories in the summertime when the Scout Troop met up in Schmitz Park and I can remember right now the thrill of playing "Capture the Flag" and the other games we played in the park. I don't know why when I got to be in the twenties, twenty-eight years of age when our first child was born. I never really seriously considered ever living anywhere else because I was certain my son would have the same opportunities. Paddle on a log or a raft or an Indian canoe as I had done. Or to hear someone like J. L. Morrow tell a ghost story or talk about Paul Bunyon up in front of an open fire or even a little fire we use to have in a little shelter up in Schmitz Park at the Scout meetings. The fact was my oldest boy didn't turn out to have any interest in scouting and the next boy was even farther removed from the desire of it. They both had brief periods of experiences in the mountains and the woods and I think they still enjoy what few camping trips we have together. But I had a whole five or six years of hiking and climbing and some trips on the water. Going to the National Boy Scout Jamboree back East. I think those were among the richest experiences in my young life and I thought that I was going to be able to provide my boys with those same experiences. Other people tell me how miserable their highschool experiences were. I don't think I had any better clothes than any other kid, but I certainly didn't have money to spend. I look back on highschool as just one joyous experience after another. Wonderful friendships, twenty-one kids in my neighborhood and I'm sort of a survivor. I lost three of my closest buddies when I grew up. We just all had great, great friendships.

Ada: Bob is just like you see, very sentimental and very remembering the good things. His class are all crazy to meet every other month. Get together. When one dies, somebody calls the

roll, somebody always gets up and says they are that person. They say that they just don't have the strength to go through old age alone. We're going up there tomorrow night. I've missed two of them and I think they are mad at me.

JonLee: Is there something that you would say distilled from your life experiences and the directive you have. What is the wealth you pass on to your children, their children and their children's children who are not here yet but will come? The third generation or the fourth generation.

Bob: I think one thing that I find a lot of satisfaction that all of our children are honest, they have managed to get through life without stepping outside the bounds even though they had some bumps along the way. You and I have let them know, you know when they would begin to lean outside what we thought were guiding lines or something. We were disappointed if they did. I notice that kids do a lot of things simply to please us and know that we're being pleased by things they do and I think they do it out of love. We made sacrifices on their behalf and certainly Ada would just drop anything to be by their side.

Thank You Bob and Ada Hallberg

Ada: No

Bob: As you go up Lander and Lander joins Admiral Way

JonLee: It's Lander that comes on from 50th Avenue and you go up that winding hill

Bob: It was just a block to the North of that junction

JonLee: The story I was thinking about that you mentioned about was that Bob must have dressed up as something very

Bob: Oh, you're talking about the haunted house at the field house

Ada: I'll go back to the Field house and Bob will tell the story, but I would like to give an introduction to that because I can't say exactly what year it was. It could have been the 20's or maybe the very early 30's. My Aunt May How was an active woman with many friends

ADA AND ROBERT HALLBERG

Interviewed by: JonLee Joseph
June 7, 1999

Chapter Two

- JonLee: I would like to hear the haunted house story. What kind of a house was that?
- Bob: It's really a haunted church.
- Ada: Oh, that's a story that Bob can tell.
- Bob: The trouble is I don't even know the name of that street.
- Ada: You're talking about where the Gundersons lived. That's at the top of Lander, Lander comes up from Alki at the top of Admiral. Then just up about a block into Admiral Way on the North side.
- Bob: It's North of Admiral Way. There is a street that parallels Admiral Way. It was when I was a boy, always a dirt lane just a couple of ruts. It ended up at a church which was abandoned sometime, I would think some time in the 20's. It was apparently built at the time when all of West Seattle enjoyed this big building boom. It was a church about 20 X 40 feet floor space. It had a basement that had been excavated, it was built on the side of a bluff. It had a spectacular view. Why someone located it in that area, I don't know because it didn't have a big
- Ada: No
- Bob: As you go up Lander and Lander joins Admiral Way.
- JonLee: It's Lander that comes up from 56th Avenue and you go up that winding hill.
- Bob: It was just a block to the North of that junction.
- JonLee: The story I was thinking about that you mentioned about was that Bob must have dressed up as something very
- Bob: Oh, you're talking about the haunted house at the field house.
- Ada: I'll go back to the Field house and Bob will tell the story, but I would like to give an introduction to that location I can't say exactly what year it was. It could have been the 20's or maybe the very early 30's. My Aunt May Howat was an active woman with having just

She lived up at the top of the hill what is Hillcrest. That was all woods, really deep woods up there when they were living there. You came down trails. But she and all of her zest for parties was put upon the idea of having an exciting and fun Halloween for the children of Alki at the field house. So she put on this annual field house event on Halloween night or the night before Halloween and this is what he is going to talk about. It had many, many aspects to it but one of them for young children, for older kids and that is where Bob was the spook house.

JonLee: Back to the haunted church story.

Bob: I was very active with the boy scout troop that met in the field house and at some point the boy scouts took over the operation of the haunted house which was just one part of several different activities that the field house had on Halloween night. I think there were games upstairs and there must have been food somewhere.

Ada: Oh, you're talking about things that went on in the field house? Many other things went on in the field house besides the spook house. Yes there were all kinds of games in which you could win prizes. My Aunt loved to give prizes out. You could win prizes with everything. We used to be able to duck for apples then which wasn't the greatest idea. But we could do that and we had them hanging on strings and you could try and get bites out of them and there were games of that nature as well as some kinds of races. You know that field house was big and it had many rooms. So in one room also was near the haunted house but not the haunted house was a place where you went and someone would tell you a bunch of stories, scary stories and you would never know when someone would turn off the lights. That was for the kids who were to scared to go to the spook house.

JonLee: But you, as I recall part of the story were particularly scary in your costume and you were a good actor.

Bob: Well, we had about three or four major theme areas and I think that I might of dressed differently at different times but the one I think that I was a pirate one year and it's possible I was a villain another time and a ghost another time. But the way the field house was set up, the women's locker room had a whole series of aisles and by kind of directing and sealing off the some of the aisles you forced people into a maze. Each aisle would enter into an area in

which there was some particular attraction and the first thing when you arrived as I recall was that overhead there were some large sheets of tin or metal and by shaking those you got thunder. Where we got a strobe light I don't know because strobe lights are sort of modern but we would have flashes of lightning and thunder and that kind of set a mood for the people and they went to the very first entrance. Someone in the community had a coffin that we had on a low table and it was appropriately illuminated by a sort of lavender blue light and then we had one of the scouts lay down in the coffin and it was marvelous. His face was white. I never had the privilege of being in the coffin but we had good actors to do this and then of course as soon as the room had eight or ten people in it, a sort of an eerie voice would come out of one of the lockers near by and say, "*Oh Jim, why have you left me?*" The body in the coffin would rise up, the eyes wouldn't open and this ghostly spirit would say, "*I'm right here Esmeralda.*" There were many little children that must have wet their trousers when that ghost stood up. Some adults and some others who also got a little hysterical and drug their kids out right at that point.

Ada: And they missed the one being beheaded.

Bob: Then you went down this long aisle and to keep you terrified while you were going down the aisle, we would have scouts in the various dressing rooms that were off the aisle. Sometimes they'd rattle the door or sometime they'd just give a terrible scream. Sometimes there would be the sound of someone being stabbed and dying in there. Kids, if they had good imaginations knew that this was the worse experience they ever had. When they got to the next aisle ending, and here we had what I thought was the piece de resistance of our whole show. There was a trap door that went down into the crawl space underneath the dressing room and by taking that trap door out and putting a kind of a little door that came apart so that a mans head could be inserted in it and then we had a plate and where that plate came from I don't know. But the plate went around and it was filled up with catsup and it looked like this poor devil's head, (it was a very uncomfortable situation for him because his legs were down in a cramped position and we did have a little stool so he could sit down there) but nobody liked to stay very long in this place and it was dark when you went in there and then a voice would come out of the woodwork and would say, "*Don't step on my head.*"

The light would go on and here was this great eyes, tongues sticking out, blood flowing and oh that was terrible on little kids too. I forgot that also in one of the lockers, the door would open and here was a skeleton that somebody had managed to paint with fluorescent paint and enough blue light on it and we had strings attached to it so you could move the arms and somebody behind it would move the head. I can remember that before I was ever involved in this spook house.

Ada: Someone in there was whipping, it was you.

Bob: That was the next one. After you got by the skeleton, the coffin and the headless man, (the man whose head was removed from his body), you went into another area and this is where I as a pirate chief, was in charge of this. We were usually had the bandana on our head and the appropriate mustache and long hair and a bow whip. Lashed against the wall, held by cuffs was a poor devil who could hardly support himself and across his back, lacerations and I don't know how or where we got someone who was so clever but one of the ladies community always came forward and made this kid look like his ear was torn, his back was lacerated and the blood seemed to be oozing right out of his skin. It was terrible. I would take that whip and crack it against the wall. How he knew he wasn't going to get whipped, I don't know. It was always a younger kid and of course this was it. The kids would just scream. Of course, then I would turn on them and they would all be out of there in the blink of an eye. They would leave that field house and if mothers had allowed their kids to go in there and they saw them coming out of there terrified, they would tell the next lady who was bringing her children, "Don't send them in!"

Ada: This is not the ordinary child that came to the field house for the spook show, but she was very excited that her dad would let her go and she could go with a friend and that friends father went with them and he gave them a little tiny light that they could keep with them underneath whatever they were wearing so they wouldn't get scared in the spook house. But you know the spook house was beyond all that, he didn't know that and I guess it scared them to death because they were protected in that manner even to come to other parties and so they just weren't used to that. It was terrible! I went in there, I was in highschool when I

Bob: went in there because I knew how bad it was and I knew that he was in charge. I was just going to see if it was just terrible.

Bob: The blood and the gore ran much more freely in our spook house.

JonLee: Well you still have a smile on your face when you think of that and talk about it. I'm just glad you're talking about it in daylight.

Bob: But you know there were so many contributions, I have no idea where the coffin came from, but the skeleton came from Dr. Brady's office.

Ada: Well, Dr Brady was probably helping you with the spook house.

Bob: Every year we'd go and borrow it and it was not one of these sophisticated modern skeletons that was held together with almost undetected connections, it was all wired together and you could see the wires if you were observant. We never let anyone stay long enough that many of these little tabloids could be poking their noses into how come this head could be lying on the floor, etc. That was a serious problem because there were some older kids, toughs that would like to go in there and tear this thing up. They were called the "Alki Rats". They were probably out of highschool by the time they had these designs, but they knew damn well that if they did this, Hess Vinney would just knock their heads together.

Bob: I have to tell you one little postscript. When Ada came that time, you just had to kind of move along because you couldn't linger or stay in the spook house, but her mother had come down at ten o'clock sharp at the time she was to be home and Ada was still in the spook house. It was her second time through and I think that I detached myself from where my station was to see what her face mirrored when she came out of the door. I was standing there and Ada's mother was there with arms akimbo with this really serious look on her face and she wanted to know where Ada was. Her mother didn't like the sounds coming out of that spook house one bit.

Ada: Well Bob does tricks all the time to this day, I have to say. They aren't Alki history, but they are family history, that's for sure. We have a cabin that we go to, so he used that as a prop and scared me to death as an adult one time. This is off the record and we'll that another time.

Bob: In this cabin the floors were just ship lath and they had knot holes. In the crawl space underneath there, I ran a line from a rocking chair which was over in one corner of the cabin through the knot holes underneath the cabin and then up through a knot hole through my little bedroom and there was a little bedroom and there was you and Nancy were in the front bedroom then. When we call these bedrooms, they were just kind of shack like partitions. It was dark and we had a bon fire outside and I probably told a ghost story in order to establish the right attitude for what was going to happen. The thing that happened is I would say, "Did you hear something?"

Ada: You know of course there is no electricity, there is no lights anywhere. It's dark, there is nothing with a light. We had candles, but I don't know where they were.

Bob: Anyway, I would say, "Do you hear footsteps, do you hear footsteps?" Well of course they heard footsteps after I had announced it. And then the rocking chair began to rock and it would creak back and forth.

Ada: He would just do it a little bit. Once I would say nothing, but then it got a little bit worse.

Bob: Anyway at some point, I think they must have looked out the bedroom door . . .

Ada: No we left, we ran out of the cabin.

Bob: No you didn't. Because I was in my sleeping bag and I think you guys were sleeping under blankets. This rocking noise became so pronounced and I said there's a ghost in the chair, look!! And the chair was moving and the girls screamed and then I came out in my sleeping bag tied around my face just so I had a peep hole and I jumped like a great big caterpillar and jumped into their bedroom in my sleeping bag and they thought this truly was a ghost or something.

Ada: We never thought of a ghost, we thought of some demented person.

JonLee: When did you let them know what was going on?

Bob: I couldn't stop laughing because poor Nancy (this is her younger sister who was about sixteen at that time or younger). She was just terrified, falling apart so to speak.

Ada: She's been frightened to go down there ever since, now that I think of it. As adults, she and I were down there and took our children down. I love to go to this cabin and sure I would get afraid sometimes being there by ourselves. I always shut the door, it had no lock it was just

ajar so I'd put a chair next to it. Anyhow, I got Nancy to come down with me, not thinking and not knowing she was really frightened. We had our kids there and we had a good time during the day and that night Nancy woke up off and on all night and finally got up at dawn and went home. She just couldn't stand it. I now think I know why. She had been frightened and now I know why. She left the kids with me which was good, she wasn't trying to run away from her kids.

Maybe we should get back to Alki because there is something I want to be sure to say. I've been talking with my friends, I told you I get together with my Alki girlfriends frequently, hopefully we like to get together every month. The thing that we all remember were the good women who were our role models. They worked for the Park Department and had the job of keeping things going at the field house at that time and the play field for the girls because Hess Hiney, I don't think he had anything to do with the girls which was ok, he was mainly for the boys. I wish I had their names written all down somewhere because there were many women, usually they were University students who were studying recreational activities to become recreational leaders. There was a Miss Caldwell and Miss Palmer and Miss Lopp and Mildred Noble all of those, there's not one of those women who was not a good leader for the girls without knowing it we were really developing a self confidence. We've all agreed that having had that experience has at one time or another really made a distinct difference in our lives because of their ability to let us believe we really were Number One. We were the best. It was the confidence that we had and frankly had we been with Hess Viney we would of not ever have risen above anything.

Bob: Oh, you can't say that.

JonLee: She can because it tells another story.

Ada: Yes. I think that it was marvelous that Hess was here and I don't know a single grown man who knew Hess as a boy, who would not absolutely swear by his ability to have been an important person in their lives. But, I don't like to leave the women out, which I think it does in the recreation fields especially, with someone as great as Hess was. If it had just been a mediocre person, there would have been a boys director and a woman's director too. He was a giant among the directors.

JonLee: It's nice to hear though that the girls had women who were very good role models and they did build that self confidence because that is so important.

Ada: It really is. Also the other thing I wanted to talk about were the life guards on the beach. I think I might have said something about them, so I may be repeating myself. They were also of very high caliber individual and they were very patient and they were wonderful swimmers, they had their eye on that water all the time and you were be safe. We learned how to clean the beach and did that every day we were there and we learned something about life saving. But the guards were really not the teachers of swimming. Our swimming teachers came from the Park Department. I didn't know as much about this until I talked with a friend of mine who had taken her lessons there. She said someone came from the Park Department regularly.

Bob: There must have been a notice in the school or maybe in the Herald. But somehow you mother knew they were going to start these swimming lessons or it could have been a poster down at the beach or posted at the Drugstore, as well as the field house. There was one thing that no matter whether it was in July or June, whenever they started those swimming lessons it would be the coldest, windiest day in the year. I would be blue and my knees would knock and then finally when they told you that you had to be all wet, you had to put your head underneath the water, that was the worse kind of a pain a kid could have because usually this was the beginning of the summer and you weren't adjusted to this Puget Sound water and my God it was a terrible experience and I would just turn blue and I didn't want to go for the second lesson. My mother was a very forceful person and I would go to that second lesson and the third and the fourth until I got this little dog paddle badge.

Ada: Well you see Bob, the girls that I swam with, although I didn't take those lessons, they all were thinking that water was warm.

Bob: I think you took a couple of dips before you came to that impression, it was always cold to me the first couple of times.

JonLee: This may be an Aunt May story, but you told about a bootleg story and it may have been Aunt May. In the tunnels that the Tobacco and alcohol people thought contained bootleg bottles. Would you mind telling that story?

Ada: All of the area that is Charlestown, the very nice homes up there, many others. Hillcrest where the homes are getting more expensive now, that was all woods and Hillcrest is where my aunt lived. But there were also sand hills like sand dunes, but they were strong enough so that you could make tunnels in them and she had quite a few sons, I think four or five boys and one daughter. The boys used to dig trenches in there all the time. I believe that Bruce got this idea, I'm sure if you have interviewed very many people, you've heard about bootleggers must be every other house or every fifth house, had some kind of boot legging going on or they were making alcohol in one fashion or another so the kids knew. The kids knew that there were Federal Agents around.

Bob: The best known bootlegger was right underneath her home. That was the bootlegger my mother didn't like for me to play with the bootleggers wife's son.

Ada: Well that I didn't know, but that could be why these kids dug tunnels and they attracted the Federal People to come out there and look for the bootleggers. My Aunt didn't know anything about it of course, but she was going to do what the man said. Here came the men and they were all in suits. This was thing that was so delightful, I don't know which of my cousins, but I think it was John Bruce. I can remember them laughing and seeing these men coming in their dark suits and white shirts making certain demands and I didn't know what it was but of course, Aunt May couldn't answer any of their demands, she'd have to send the boys. They got these guys crawling around, the boys never said anything about what they got in there. The boys liked telling me about how dirty these 'all dressed up men' had to get dirty. What a joke!

Bob: First of all I think that Aunt May who was a teetotaler was really offended that they thought there was alcohol on her property.

Ada: Didn't she keep protesting?

Bob: I don't know if they had a fully excavated basement or just kind of a storage on the ground, but they wanted to go down in her basement and she was offended that they would not take her word and then some how or another I think that she had a change of mind and decided, "Well if these officious bureaucrats are going to snoop around my house, well they'll get

good and dirty." So she let them go in the basement and sure enough, the kids had made one of these tunnels had reached the basement so that there was an exit from the edge of the bluff all the way back through the front yard into the basement. That's the way I heard it. At any rate the agents were going from two different directions and they are dressed inappropriately and this is loose sand and the boys of course are just having the best time because they have pulled this great joke on them. Alcohol and Tobacco Enforcement people who we didn't even know the name of that organization. In our eyes, they were all FBI and they came from the Federal Government.

JonLee: Were they called BEV's then?

Bob: Probably.

Ada: This reminds me of other tunnels that were dug. My brother has told me about this, my brother is five years older than I. We lived right there on Marine Avenue between the beach and the field house and Alki Avenue ran at one end of our street and it wasn't paved when Neal was a little boy and you could dig in the sand anywhere even though there were boards in the road, there was sand around. They didn't want the cement to come and so he told me how he and Farley Zuber and Joe Langendorfer, both of his friends. They all were undermining the road by digging tunnels under. Of course that wasn't anything that wasn't pretty obvious and they were very young when they were doing this.

JonLee: This was when the road was a plank road, right?

Ada: Yes. It had been a plank road which I don't remember the days of the plank road. That's what they were doing to save the beach. It was like the beach came right up to your house in those days almost. It did not actually, but it felt like you lived on the beach. So they were going to take care of that.

Bob: When I was a kid, maybe as young as twelve but it seems more like fourteen or fifteen. Couples and parties would come out from the city to have a beach fire, to have a picnic on the beach and we knew they were from the city because they were always dressed nice and they had inappropriate shoes, often were wearing dress shirts and ties. In the late summer if we hadn't had log booms going by or there hadn't been a steamer that had thrown overboard dunnage that they had unloaded, there would be very little drift wood on the

beach. So these people couldn't have fires and they would often wait in the expectation that we might abandon the fire that we'd already started. Sometimes they would try to buy the fire from us, take over our fire. Other times they would pay us what we thought were just exorbitant prices, a dollar for enough wood so they could have a fire. It doesn't sound like anything, but a dollar was about twice as much as the wealthiest kids allowance for a week. That took you to the show seven times. So the way we do this was when beach wood was very scarce and these dandies would come and they wanted to impress their girlfriends and have a beach fire (some of the kid's were worse than I was), they would haggle twelve dollars for one. But a dollar was so important to me, I'd leap right to it. I lived in an apartment house, where was I going to get any wood? The only place was Mr. Brady's, Emma Schultz and Mr. Shaffer's woodpile. I would race around the neighborhood, usually I would take a shopping bag and put kindling in that. The kindling was found just in the alleys and along fence posts, and in vacant lots, but the real substantial wood had already been cut by one of my neighbors. You know you have to be a little cautious about lifting the pieces off the pile. He was going to miss them so you were always looking for a piece that fell down behind the pile and was next to the garage or a piece that you had anticipated when you might have a chance to sell some wood later you had stashed between the garages. Then you'd go down and collect your dollar and you were so wealthy, you know you just felt sorry for your father who had to work so hard.

JonLee: Had you heard this story before?

Ada: No I hadn't heard about this, but I can visualize it. You know as he is telling his story, I'm realizing that as you go along the beach from where he talking about which is at the foot of 56th or 57th and you go around the Lighthouse, would be a little different story in that area. I don't think that a self-respecting person was going to take any wood from the people who lived down there, because that was not the recreational area. That was more residential and the very serious matter of needing that wood, absolutely needing that wood because that's what they cooked with.

Bob: I don't think I ever took it from someone who I felt needed it, but often when people in our neighborhood would get wood just like when your daddy and mine got wood, if you were the

father of one of your playmates, their would be five or six of us that would help carry the wood up to where he loaded it on the cart and then hauled it to his house. So you felt you had a vested interest in that wood too after all. I think if nice pieces of bark came in, we would always haul them up to Ted's house or to Mr. Brady's house.

Ada: I think that's what I'm trying to say, there is a little conclave of people down there who could do these things among themselves and that was OK. But it wasn't something that you would spread all around the beach community and do, and think that there was an OK feeling about it, isn't that right?

JonLee: Thank you very much. Another story.

Bob: Another story. I am in the sixth grade. My father was a Rockwood Missouri Republican and everything associated with Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal and he felt, he honestly believed Mr. Hoover when the President said that, "If you elect Franklin Delano Roosevelt, grass will grow in the streets." So at any rate in the big landslide in 1932 that swept Roosevelt into power and the New Deal, there were many Democratic candidates who were seeking offices, every kind of office and at that time you were permitted to hand out literature even as people entered the polling booths, I think you only had to stay a hundred feet or fifty feet away from the polling booth. So I went to school and when I got out of school, a man approached me and said, "Would I hand out this literature?" It was for a democratic candidate and I said, "My parents are Republicans, I'll have to go get permission." I ran home because this man promised me he would pay me a quarter. Well a quarter, that was minimum wage for an adult for one hour's work, so imagine being able to get a quarter and he just had a handful, maybe 50 brochures and it seemed like the easiest way to steal money that I had ever heard of and I went down and asked my mother if I could do this. It was a wrenching decision she had to make, but she voted right, she said "Go back and earn that quarter!" I raced back to the street and got this handful of paper and I never thought, when he reached into his pocket he got about five or six quarters, who had six quarters in their pocket at that time? He gave it to me so easily, it just slipped out of his hand. One quarter to hand out papers and then he was off to the next polling place to find a boy who would stand and hand those out.

JonLee: Now you father was home to ask, right?

Bob: No, my daddy didn't usually get home, well he was suppose to leave work at 5:00 o'clock but during the depression, he always worked about an hour overtime. I think to impress his boss how conscientious he was. My father would be the last guy in the office, he'd be the only one there on a Saturday afternoon. He was the first one there in the morning to open things up. I just wanted to say that daddy never wavered in this loyalty to Hoover and Coolidge.

JonLee: And you did for a quarter.

Thank you again for this second interview

JonLee Joseph