

Emily Moore

Kingston, Washington

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for

Southwest Seattle Historical Society

by

JonLee Joseph

Emily Moore
Interviewed by: JonLee Joseph
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1st Oral Interview

JonLee: ...I'm interviewing Emily Moore of Kingston, Washington, for the Log House Museum. The date is October 2nd, the year 2000.

We are live. Now. I've already done the leader that I'm meeting with you today.

Just to say Thank you very much for being able to tell the stories for the Historical Society. We really appreciate it, deeply. Because without the stories, we don't know.

So, I wanted to start because you made mention of your great grandfather and what I'm going to be pulling in from my little bit of knowledge with the pre-interview I'm going to come back to West Seattle, but I'm also going to branch out such as how your parents met and things like this.

So, I'd like to start, would you please tell about your great grandfather and his shipping business and what kind of ships they were?

Emily: My great grandfather came around the Horn in a sailing ship. A small, ship at the time. He came to Port Townsend, which was the Port of Entry into Washington Territory. Before we became a State. He had a mail contract with the government to deliver mail to all the outlying towns like La Conner, all up through the Swinomish Slough, even, Everett, Mukilteo, all the little villages at that time. Then he carried freight also when the ships became larger. He had, at one time, a fleet

of eight sailing ships. He also carried lumber to San Francisco, during their building boom after their big fire. At that time, I remember my mother saying that he was quite interested in the culture of the Northwest. He enjoyed the water, and I think that's why I've enjoyed the water myself.

JonLee: Can you tell his name, please?

Emily: Yes, Captain James Brittain.

JonLee: So, that was your mother's maiden name then?

Emily: No.

JonLee: 'Cause that was your great grandfather?

Emily: Yes.

JonLee: It was her grandfather? And what happened to his business?

Emily: He passed away at an early age. His wife and an accountant checked the books and the bookkeeper had kept a double set of bookkeeping. So the mother, the wife, did not receive anything when he passed away.

JonLee: What does that mean, the bookkeeper absconded?

Emily: Yes. I do not know his name or anything about that. That's all my mother had said about it.

JonLee: There was no way to chase down that person.

Emily: I suppose nowadays, yes. In modern technology, but not then--

JonLee: --they just let him go.

Emily: I'm sure she inherited something. Like the selling of the boats and things. But as far as any wealth I do not know.

JonLee: Now, where did your grandmother live then, after her husband died?

Emily: She lived, she and, well, can I go back a little bit?

JonLee: Oh, please.

Emily: Their daughter, Emma, was my mother's mother and she married a man by the name of Mr. Anderson. I don't know how long they were married, but then she became pregnant and it was my mother who was born. But the mother died in childbirth and her birth name was Genevieve Anderson. The father sold her to the grandparents, Captain Brittain and his wife, for a thousand dollars. That was in 1886. So, they legally adopted her. Her name then was Genevieve Brittain.

JonLee: And you were named after her mother, then?

Emily: Yes. Only Emily, instead of Emma.

JonLee: So, then, she was raised by her grandparents, and when her grandfather died did her grandmother remarry?

Emily: No, never. They lived together. Grandma and my mother.

JonLee: And which town was that in?

Emily: Seattle. In the Denny Regrade. Mother was born in the Denny Regrade District. 1st and Bell. I remember when the Denny Hill was--

JonLee:--leveled?

Emily: Razed they called it years ago. They dumped the dirt out in the Sound, on big barges and sluices. Then my father came out to Seattle from Cleveland, Ohio. His name was Franklin Stokes. He came out in 1907 to do the telephone wiring for the Alaska Yukon Exposition. He met my mother at a dance. They were married in 1909. The grandmother and my mother and my father all lived together. My great grandmother lived until 1910. Because my brother was born in February of 1911. Then my sister, Vevette, born 1914 and myself born 1916. There were three of us in our family.

JonLee: Did the family live at 1st and Bell?

Emily: No, they bought a house, and all three of us were born on Broadway and Newton Street in Capitol Hill. We lived there until I was two. We moved on Memorial weekend, out to Laurelhurst, which was our family home. The old house is still there, right on the corner of 10th Avenue North and Newton, which is really Broadway, like continuation of Broadway going north. A very nice neighborhood. But we had a dog that was killed. My mother thought, "I don't want any children killed." It was a busy street. Really it wasn't a big lot. It was nice, but houses close together. They bought this house way out, past the University. And lived there ever since, till all of us were married and then my sister just recently sold the house because she remarried. But, there are wonderful memories of that house. There was not a lot of people there at that time and we had a next door playfield our own little vacant lot, played ball, we made our own fun. Our family was very oriented to do things as a family. My father took us all over on trips to Oregon, Mt. Rainier, you know, sledding, before skiing, those days. But then we did ski later. Sledding at Mt. Rainier. Picnicking, visiting Seaside, Oregon or Cedar River every weekend, seemed we went some place (inaudible) the family just was together all the time.

JonLee: I want to ask you about Laurelhurst when you were young. Was it the kind of place, more like country, where you could have chickens if you'd wanted them, or cows?

Emily: Oh, we had chickens. No cows, but we had chickens.

JonLee: So, it was that kind of country kind of place.

Emily: Well, it wasn't country because it wasn't a lot of vegetation, you know, but there were a few homes, but not woods. Then finally it was all leveled and of course new homes came in all the time, and then real Laurelhurst really took off, farther to the East.

JonLee: Now, in terms of your growing up and your background, where did you go to school?

Emily: We walked two miles to Bryant School. All of us went to Bryant School and those days we went to the eighth grade and then went right into Roosevelt High School. I graduated from Bryant and we were the last class out of Bryant before you had to go to Junior High. That was in 1930. When I graduated and then went right into Roosevelt as a freshman, graduated from Roosevelt High School in '34 and then I went to the University of Washington, '35 and '36, studying nursing. Then my father became very ill and had a stroke, a severe stroke. So, I felt I was the one to take care of the family. I didn't finish the University. I went to business college and got a job right away and helped the family. Then I could be home and I wasn't married then, so took care of him, gave him shots. He loved to go for rides, but we didn't have television those days. He loved to play cards and he could read and hear, but he just couldn't speak. Then we bought alphabet card with all the alphabet and he would point to the letters to spell out a word and we knew when he spelled out a word, "I want to" then we'd know he had to go to the restroom or wanted to go for a ride. He loved movies.

JonLee: He wasn't in a wheelchair then?

Emily: No, no.

JonLee: And you could drive?

Emily: Oh yes.

JonLee: Could your mother drive?

Emily: She never drove. I was working, but I would come home and then take him and do things. Give him shots in the morning and bathe him and then Mother could take care of him during the day. If he was up in the chair, you know, you had to hang on to him, he couldn't walk by himself. He was a heavy set man. He was just a wonderful person. He loved life. But, those days, they didn't have the technology, the medicine. He worked for the telephone company for years and years and that's why he was transferred out here, from Cleveland. That was Western Electric years ago, but, it was Pacific Northwest Bell.

JonLee: Now, how did the Depression impact your family. Your father, before his stroke--

Emily: But the Depression was in '29 and see he didn't have the stroke, till '36, so he was still working and we were fine.

JonLee: Did your family notice that other families--

Emily: Oh, yes. There were families across the street that had to pick up food. But I remember he used to come home with a pillowcase of food. He worked, at the University of Washington as a Security Officer, like a night watchman. I think they noticed the Depression. But we had a car. There no buses. We had to walk up to what we called the end of the car line. The Ravenna Streetcar up by the Calvary Cemetery. That was the end of the line. We had to walk up there if we wanted to go any place. But finally, we did get a bus service, a little bit there on 45th. That helped a lot but it only went to the University District. We'd go and then there was no stores. Just a little Mom and Pop store. I remember that. But like when you want your week's groceries, you know, bigger items, there was nothing. I remember Piggly Wiggly was the first chain store and that wasn't even out our way. But, we used to go to town every Saturday and go to the Market, the Public Market and buy our vegetables, our meat. We had no refrigerator, we had an ice box. I remember our phone number was Kenwood-0055. We were the fifty-fifth person to have a phone. We did have lights. But then I remember when all this came into being.

JonLee: Now, would you remember you think, I have heard that there was a truck farm where University Village is, was owned by a Japanese or leased by a Japanese family. Do you remember that farm?

Emily: Yes, I do.

JonLee: What did they grow there?

Emily: Everything. Any kind of vegetable. Beans, peas, corn, lettuce, radishes, onions. But we had to walk quite a ways and there was no viaduct like there is now and it went around the stadium, it didn't go up the hill. It came on 45th and went all around by the stadium..

JonLee: Did you bicycle? Did you have bicycles?

Emily: My brother did. Mother wouldn't let us have a bicycle.

JonLee: Because it wasn't feminine for girls or it was considered---

Emily: Well, we had dirt streets and no sidewalks and we had what they called the boulevard down right by the lake. Mother thought that was too dangerous. But I used to borrow my neighbor's bike and I'd ride. We had scooters and we had roller skates. But, I always wanted a bike, but I never received one. (laughs) But, I remember, I wore my scooter out, my sister's too. The rubber.

JonLee: Because you were riding on dirt?

Emily: Then we had planks for, like a sidewalk. They weren't together tight. I have a scar right there and that was a bad gash when I was little. I had a doll buggy and I got the wheel caught in between the crack and I had a doll that was my favorite doll, but it broke her skull open. I fell, it was a porcelain doll, and of course, the buggy went in there and I went over and fell on the doll's head. Mother just bandaged it. No stitches.

JonLee: Hydrogen Peroxide? Anything?

Emily: No.

JonLee: Mercurochrome?

Emily: Oh, I don't know. I don't think so.

JonLee: Okay.

Emily: I don't think that was invented yet.

JonLee: I wonder what was used for antiseptic.

Emily: Well, Mother used Witch Hazel a lot. She had Witch Hazel for mosquito bites or anything.

JonLee: I use it. I like it. Now, I want to move forward and ask how did you meet your husband? Would you tell that story about going up to Camano Island?

Emily: Well, my family and two other friends of my family were all together up at Camano Island. We had been up to Canada. We came back to Camano Island on our way back. But, in the meantime, we had some friends by the name of Compton, of my folks' friends, and they were very friendly, with people by the name of Moore. Comptons lived on Beacon Hill and Moores lived in West Seattle. They were very friendly. Mr. Moore and Mr. Compton used to go fishing a lot. That's

how they became friends. Well, then, Mr. Moore and his son Bennett built a thirty-six foot cruiser in their back yard in West Seattle. It is still running today. It is documented. The name is *Ellen*, named after his mother. His father said he could take the boat out for a weekend. So he and his best friend Ted, knew that the Comptons were going to be at Camano Island. But they didn't know about all of us. Mr. Compton said, "Oh, there's Ben." They called him Benny in those days. "Here's Benny." So finally he came to shore. I was only thirteen years old and my sister was fifteen. He looked like Lindbergh a little bit. Anyway, they came to shore and we all met and then right away my sister asked if they could stay for dinner. So Mother said, "Yes." And then they said, "Well let's have a bonfire." So we had a bonfire. Well, "Emily you get the marshmallows, Emily you get some wood." So we had a nice bonfire. Everybody was there. My sister just thought he was the most handsome man in the world. I wasn't interested in boys. I was very sports-minded. I was into everything at school. I still am, more or less. But anyway, then they stayed on their boat that night. Then the next day they came in and had breakfast with us. Then when they went home, we all went home. Then my mother called his mother and asked if he could come over the next Saturday night to take Vevette someplace or take her to a show. Or just come over. Well, he didn't want to. He'd bring Ted with him, so he did. So, the four of us would go out. His folks summered out at Kingston.

JonLee: Here in Kingston?

Emily: Right here at the beach. And they invited our family out to visit. Then we had a big bonfire. They were summering, so we summered the

next year. My Dad stayed in town until he came out on the weekends. There wasn't the transportation that there is now. He wanted to know who wanted to go fishing at daylight. And I said, "I'll go fishing."

JonLee: Who's this? Who wanted to know?

Emily: Bennett.

JonLee: Bennett Moore.

Emily: I had just started high school and he was in the University. So I said, "Sure I'll go fishing." Then, Who wants to dig clams? We would dig clams. Then when I was in high school, he would come over and meet after school in his car. I thought that was pretty neat to have somebody with the University of Washington decal. (laughs). When I graduated and went to the University, then we were both there at the same time. I knew where his car was parked. He would put a note there for me or I'd put a note for him. That's how we really started going together. We had interests the same. We just hit it off. I didn't really take him away from my sister, but, they always thought I did. But, you know I wouldn't do that.

JonLee: But he was never interested in your sister.

Emily: No, he wasn't. But, Mother didn't have to call his mother to have him come over when he asked me. He lived in West Seattle and we lived out in the north end, I maybe only see him a couple times during the week or on the weekends. But we went skiing. He made our skis. We

went every weekend skiing. He was in the ROTC and we'd go to dances. I was in Rainbow Girls at the University Chapter Number Thirteen. They'd have Tolo Dances and different things. So, it was just mutual that we just kind of grew up together.

JonLee: Now, where did his family live in West Seattle?

Emily: 45th and Alaska, right at the Junction. A block off the Junction.

JonLee: Now, did you wait to marry until after your father died?

Emily: Yes. My father died in 1940 and we were married in 1941. So he couldn't give me away, but he loved Ben and Ted.

JonLee: You had his blessing then.

Emily: Oh yes.

JonLee: And did you ever have your sister's blessing?

Emily: Yes.

JonLee: And then where did you live together?

Emily: We lived in West Seattle. We lived at the Admiral Apartments. When we were first married. Then we moved to his parents house in '45. Finally we built our own home on Beach Drive in West Seattle.

JonLee: I think you said it was 5061?

Emily: 5016.

JonLee: 5016. Now when did you become active in the Alki Women's Improvement Club?

Emily: Well, it was way before this. I would say about, maybe '48, 1948.

JonLee: And you were President, were you not?

Emily: At one time yes. And I was Secretary.

JonLee: And do you want to tell the story or do you want to take a momentary break?

Emily: I'm just fine.

JonLee: Do you want to tell the story of this marvelous accomplishment of conceiving of the idea and having it commissioned and raising the funds for it to have a Diorama built for the Museum of History and Industry on the landing of the Schooner *Exact* and the families that came off of that.

Emily: First of all, I belonged also, to the Daughters of Pioneers Number One in Washington. That is the organization that all the descendants had to arrive in Washington, before it became Washington State. My great grandfather came here in 1868. We were eligible to be members.

That's how I knew Mrs. Watt and a lot of these pioneers who all belonged to this same organization. But being in West Seattle I was active, very interested in the Alki Women's Improvement Club. It was really considered one of the nicest clubs in Seattle to be a member of. We were approached late in 1950, if we would sponsor a Diorama. And at the time we really didn't know what a Diorama was.

JonLee: Now who approached you for that?

Emily: I believe it was the Director of the Museum.

JonLee: On the Board of the Museum of History and Industry?

Emily: Yes. We didn't even think we'd do it at the time. In fact, they asked us what we would like to have in the Diorama. They gave us several options. One was the Seattle fire. We knew about it, of course. We thought, "No." Alki is what we had chosen. We wanted to portray the landing of the Schooner *Exact* at Alki Point on November 13th, 1851. We found out what a Diorama was and that it would be a worthwhile civic contribution to make. So, we said, "Yes." Well, then they approached us and said that they thought it would only cost us around eight hundred dollars to have it made. Then it would be installed into the wall of the building, of the Museum of History and Industry. The first thing we had to do was find out who we could obtain to be an artist. Someone suggested an artist in California. And we said, "No, the person had never been to Seattle. The person had never lived at Alki. They didn't know the History of the Schooner *Exact* and of the beginning of Seattle." Finally it was suggested, an artist,

Lillian Smart, who I did not know at the time. She was approached and came out and she said, "Yes." She would do it, that we would commission her to do it and what we would pay her, but we didn't say "Eight hundred dollars." But, we knew kind of a ballpark what, so then she said "Yes." Well, it was very slow in the progress. But she had to make wax forms of everything in that Diorama. That took a lot of time to be authentic and to size. All different sizes of people and scenes. So that took her a long time to decide how big to make the figures and to make the wax figures. Then finally we had to approve those. She made them out of dried apples. Which had to be really processed and completely dry. We took her up to Mt. Rainier. I took her up to Snoqualmie Falls, the Summit. She wanted authentic trees that were here when the pioneers arrived. Finally it took over a year for her to do this.

JonLee: How did you raise money for that?

Emily: Oh. Yes. First of all, we would have white elephant sales, bake sales, rummage sales, raffles. After all that, we only really had a few hundred dollars. Well, I knew we weren't even close to eight hundred dollars. But in the meantime, the Museum informed us that they had sealed the wall where the Diorama was to be placed because it was becoming completed, the building. They said, now you have to have it in a glass showcase. Well, we went all over, I went to Frederick and Nelson's, Rhodes Department Store, Bon Marché, thinking we could buy a glass showcase. The Museum said that wasn't right. It had to be glass, light proof, heat proof, sun proof, and had to be a certain thickness of glass. The glass had to be set in felt. The whole Diorama

had to be fumigated in case there were any insects from the trees or germs in the air. All this took so much time. Finally I knew the descendants of the original landing party and it was really through my knowledge that, I called them personally, and they knew me and the Daughters of Pioneers, and I said that we were sponsoring this Diorama and that we really would like to know if you'd care to donate. We never asked any amount. Well, here came five hundred. Here came a hundred dollars, here came a thousand dollars. And so, I opened a bank account up at Washington Mutual Bank in West Seattle and deposited the money. I had a receipt, also a little passbook, those days, they'd stamp it. That's how we received that much money in order to pay for the showcase and pay her.

JonLee: She charged more than eight hundred dollars in the end didn't she?

Emily: Yes, yes. Besides, we gave her food, we gave her unlimited taxi service as she didn't have a car. She lived up on Capitol Hill, we all lived in West Seattle. We said, "Well, just charge it and we'll pay the bill." It just snowballed. Then she became ill, like the flu, she was off for a week here and a week there and then she went on a trip someplace for a little while. A few days, but that just postponed the completion of the Diorama. It was gorgeous when she really finished it. It was just absolutely gorgeous. It's really a monument in itself. If more people knew about it. It is just, depicting Seattle when it first started. When they landed at Alki Point. Total cost of the Diorama was \$8,000.

JonLee: Now you live in Kingston and have lived in Kingston for how many years?

Emily: Thirty three.

JonLee: Thirty three years. When you look back at your time in West Seattle, what stands out? Your work with the Alki Women's Improvement Club, the landscape, although here in Kingston, you are on the beach and you have a spectacular wonderful view.

Emily: Well, I loved West Seattle. We had a lovely home, and lovely landscape. I loved working out in the yard. I was president of the Alki PTA, I was president of the Pre-School Association. I enjoy helping people. That's my goal in life to help people and do things. I always say "yes" instead of "no." But, it's just my nature to take part. I try to do the best I can and reach my goal. If I set out to do something I see it to the finish. I wanted to say one thing about the dedication of the Diorama. The day it was to be dedicated, out to the History of Industry, I went to town, to have my hair fixed. I didn't feel too well, but I thought, "Well, it's just, I'm tired." But, and then I took the bus home and I ran into my friend. And she said, "Emily, your hair looks lovely, but you look terrible." That night was the dedication. I said, "Oh, I'm fine, I'll be there." She calls my mother and tells her that I didn't feel good or look good. My mother called the doctor in West Seattle and I had the old fashioned quinsy. I had abscesses hanging down my throat. I couldn't swallow. I remember getting my hair done, in those days sitting under the dryer. I said, "Oh, I'd love to have a glass of water." My throat was just raw. Then after I was finished, I remember

before I walked to First Avenue to get the bus to Alki, I stopped and had a glass of orange juice. I thought, "Well, I just have a sore throat." But when the doctor came down I had to go to bed for two weeks. My mother came right over. We had hot compresses on my neck for twenty four hours a day so the abscesses would break. The night of the dedication I was not there. At that time I was not President. It took so long for the Diorama to be completed, that a new set of officers had to be installed and Mrs. Harold Badkin was Vice President. She did the presentation.

JonLee: I want to check with you. When you wanted to take Lillian Smart to some old growth trees. My understanding of Schmitz Park is that Schmitz Park has some old growth. That's why Ferdinand Schmitz left it to the city. But, they weren't big enough?

Emily: No. But they weren't the right kind. You know like, real noble fir, things up in the mountains. The costumes had to be authentic, she did a lot of research. The buttons had to be the kind of buttons they had on the ladies dresses. Well, you can see from this. Like right here, see the little buttons. It just, everything had to be just exact. We took her to antique places that she knew. The sand had to be fumigated and everything. It just took so much time.

JonLee: So, were you pleased with the end result?

Emily: Oh yes, it is an inspiration. It truly is. I really don't know if Lillian Smart is alive today. I'm sure she's passed away. All these ladies have passed away that we had in our club. So. But, it was lovely. Time

goes on and things go on without you. But, I had everything under control at the time, everything was completed and I was very satisfied. I had seen it myself before it was dedicated. Then that was a big problem getting it out there. That's why it cost so much, it had to be transported. She had to set everything in and then sealed, hermetically, and then shipped in glass up there. That was very expensive. But, it was worth it. Then the backdrop was painted here by Fran Zallinger. I remember that. It is just the Bells, the Borens, the Terrys, the Lowes, the Dennys. Oh, I knew all those. They're all figures twenty inches high. The landing party built the log cabin out of certain kind of logs. This is describing the way it was, by trees and shore that lined the shores and the Point at that time. (From the estimate of \$800 the end cost was \$8,000.)

JonLee: Okay, thank you very much. I appreciate--

Emily: Is that enough on the Diorama?

JonLee: Oh Yes.

End of Interview.