

**Interview with Margaret (Buzz) Schnoebelen**  
**January 26, 2011**  
**Conducted in the Schnoebelen home, Kinsley, Kansas**  
**Interviewers: Joan Weaver and Rosetta Graff, Kinsley Library**

This is an interview conducted by the Kinsley Library on January 26, 2011. We are in the home of Margaret (Buzz) Schnoebelen.

Joan: Margaret, what is your full name? No, you don't have to give your middle name.

Margaret: Margaret E. Schnoebelen.

Joan: Where do you currently reside?

Margaret: 416 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Kinsley, Kansas 67547.

Joan: When and where were you born?

Margaret: In Muscoda, Wisconsin, September 29, 1919.

Joan: And what were the names of your parents?

Margaret: Emmaline Caroline Lemke and Peter Arnold Lemke.

Joan: And your mother's maiden name?

Margaret: Schlump.

Joan: And maybe we should spell Lemke too.

Margaret: Lemke.

Joan: And your grandparents, what were their names?

Margaret: Mary Delph Schlump and John Schlump. On my father's side, I don't know. My Grandpa Lemke was dead before I was born, and my Grandma Lemke died shortly after. I just never saw them. She was a Fleming, and married a Lemke, but I don't even know what my grandpa's first name was.

Joan: What was your household like, brothers, sisters, that sort of thing?

Margaret: Well, I had one sister, Marcelite, and we were a very normal, average household in the city limits of Muscoda. The majority of our relatives lived in the surrounding territory because most of them were either cheese makers or farmers.

Joan: What was your father? What did your father do?

Margaret: My father worked in a furniture factory, and my mother was a wonderful seamstress. For a very short time, she helped her sister who was a professional seamstress.

Joan: This is going to get into your history, I know, but what brought you to Edwards County?

Margaret: My husband, unbeknownst to me, because he had been separated from the navy, and he had a wife and a child, and he thought he'd better start looking for a job. So he and his father, while I stayed home with a child, I didn't even know where they were going. I didn't know what direction they were going. And they came over the viaduct into Kinsley, Kansas, and my husband looked over the town there, and the town looked very pretty and had a lot of trees. He wasn't used to that, being born in arid Oklahoma. This looked beautiful to him, and he said it looked like a nice place to stay and make a living. So, he scouted around and found out that there were two doctors here. The older doctor was pretty much on his last legs.

Joan: What was his name?

Margaret: Stoltenberg. I mean sometimes he practiced, and sometimes he didn't. So Rene went see Dr. Unruh, and when he went to his office, there was standing room only, which gave Rene hope. He talked to Dr. Unruh, who said that it was such a heavy load that he was going to either have to get some help or move someplace else. This was music, of course, to Rene's ears. Life couldn't be this easy. So, after talking a little while, he found that Dr. Unruh had an excellent background. He had gotten one degree from a London, England, school, and he'd been in the war too. So it looked like it would be fine if they could get along. Rene was going to be across the street in an office, but they would have to certainly work together. This sounded like a sensible, reasonable, and hopefully, profitable business.

Joan: Just out of curiosity, had Rene looked at any other towns?

Margaret: No.

Joan: Just this one here?

Margaret: Yes, well, he didn't want to live too close to his home town because we stopped one afternoon while we were...before we started looking, and some guy walked up to him, and said, "Oh, you're Reney Schnoebelen! Omer Schnoebelen's little boy!" And he said, "This place isn't for me." So, we decided we couldn't live there, and his father of course would have loved if we had. But he said I just don't think it would work. That's why we looked someplace else.

Joan: Okay, well, let's go back then just a little bit. Sort of tell us what you were doing during the war, and how you met Rene.

Margaret: Well, prior to the war I worked in a hospital. I was in a typing pool where the medical school and the university hospital were in Madison, Wisconsin. It seems like, of course I don't know how medical schools are now, I only was in that one, but Rene would be walking in the halls and I would see him. Sometimes he nodded, and sometimes he didn't. I never thought much about it one way or the other. Unfortunately, or fortunately, I ate some tainted tuna fish and got really sick. They had to put me in the hospital, and he happened to be the intern at that time who took care of me. So we got to know each other – better than I wished, (*laughter*) in a different way actually...but there it was. And of course, we got to know each other. Not real well, we didn't have a lot of dates or anything, but that's how we met. And this was in, he was only there half a year, and in that half a year before he went on to his residency, we only had six dates. I was Republican, and he was Democrat. He was Catholic, and I was Presbyterian. And nobody gave much hope for this union. And it worked.

Joan: So within six months, you decided you were getting married?

Margaret: No, it took another half a year. We just kind of wrote to each other, and we decided that a long-distance romance wasn't much fun either. So after a couple visits to me up there, we decided that this was what we would do.

Joan: And this is before the war?

Margaret: Yes.

Joan: And so you got married before he was in the Navy? Or after?

Margaret: Yes, he was in his residency, and he had another three months to go, but we got married. He had really just started his residency when we got married in Madison, Wisconsin. Then we moved to Muskogee, that's where he was, and in September of that year, he came home one day, and said, "Well, I've enlisted in the Navy." And here again, it may be my personality, but I think it was also the way women were 50 or 60 years ago. Instead of throwing my apron over my head and crying, I said, "Okay, all right." So that was the end of that. He went in the Navy, and the first place we were was Corpus Christi, Texas. Then we were moved around.

Joan: And you stayed with him? And you followed him?

Margaret: Yes, until he went overseas.

Joan: So you lived in Corpus Christi?

Margaret: For a month, and then they moved him back to Tulsa, Oklahoma, and he was the only officer there. So he had his hands full. He'd examine people, but he also had to put his stamp on a lot of paperwork. But it worked fine, and we were there during the time that I got pregnant. Then, he was moved to North Carolina, and I can't even remember where. Isn't that something. Anyway, when Renee was three months old and we got there Christmas Eve. It didn't make any difference that he was an officer. I mean the thing of it is that you took what they had. So we looked for a house or something to live in. This didn't bother me, but the only place they had was in the colored area. That was all right, but the whole house wasn't as big as this room. You had a wood stove, and I frankly didn't think I could keep us warm. He wasn't going to be there to do it, and it was dirty. So, we went to a motel or hotel for that night and the next day. He went to where he was going to work and told them our predicament. A woman who was, oh what is it when they don't believe in doctors... Christian Science...and she had broken her arm and she would not have a cast on it. So she needed some help. So that's where I landed. I helped her, and I had Renee, and he was off at the fort getting ready to fight the war. But he came back every weekend.

We were there a month when he when he came back and said, "I'm being shipped overseas. Time for you to go home." So, I called my folks and they were tickled to death to have me. It was hard to even get a ticket on a train, you know, because it was always full of the troops. He got me a ticket as far as Cincinnati, and he un-strapped the watch on his arm and put that on my arm when he kissed me goodbye at the train. He said, "At least you can see when to feed the baby." He put me on the train and said, "You're on your own." I said, "Okay." I took some formula along and warmed that formula up in the bottle between my legs. That's how I warmed it. I mean, they were feeding food to the troops. If my husband was going to fight the war, by golly I was going to do my bit. So I didn't gripe or anything, I just did it. Fortunately, Renee liked being left alone. If I just covered her up, and if her face was

where it was dark, she liked that, so she was a real good baby. Everything went well. I got to Cincinnati, and lo and behold, a guy came up to me and said, "For heaven's sake, Margaret Lemke, how are you?" I said, "I'm no longer Lemke...Schnoebelen...but I'm in kind of a fix. I'm having to get a ticket and go on to Chicago." I thought if I could get as far as Chicago, I sure could get home.

Well, I could see that he was a little drunk, but he was an officer, which helped. He said, "Don't worry. I'll get you a seat." And he did! That got me as far as Chicago, I was delighted! I mean, I put up with whatever he said. Well, he wasn't ornery or anything, in fact he was rather entertaining. He told me what he was doing and everything. We talked about the good old times. When I left him there, I got to Chicago, and I got a train to Muscoda. I hadn't eaten for about two days. I'd had a few snacks and stuff, but I was really hungry. I was sitting in the lobby of the train station at the depot, and I could see the dining room, which was making me salivate awfully heavily because I was so hungry. There was a little old lady beside me, and I didn't know what to do with Renee. She finally said to me, "Do you want to go to the dining room?" and I said, "Yes." She said, "I'll take care of the baby." Well, I was scared to death to let her, but there wasn't anybody else around her. I looked in the dining room, and I saw a seat where I could see her. I thought if I can see her and watch her while I eat, I think I can do it. But I was really in danger of not making it home. I just hadn't had hardly anything to eat. So I did, and it worked. I had a lot of good luck, you know, and got a ticket to go to Chicago, and from there to Madison and on home. And then I was home, of course, for almost 3 years which worked well. I was glad to be home and have a place to be. So that's where I spent my time when my husband was overseas.

Joan: And then Doctor came back? How long before he was off looking for Kinsley?

Margaret: In about a month, not very long. And looking back on it, I think he made a very wise decision, I really do. We didn't know a soul; what little furniture we had was second hand, but we were glad to have that. We didn't have a stove; we didn't have a refrigerator. We had an icebox that held ten pounds of ice. Rene would come home from his office at noon and would have ten pounds of ice on his back. He'd put it in the icebox, and then when he'd come home in the evening, he bring a little more. We'd chip it up and throw it in there. That's the way it worked until we could find a refrigerator. But this is the house we started in, and we stayed in it.

Joan: So he found this house and then he came back and got you? And you moved out here with the car and each other?

Margaret: He called me over the phone and said, "I've found a house. I know what it will look like some day." So I said okay. It looked awfully big to me. Of course it was empty. It was needing repair, but it was livable. I'm always amazed at what people think they've got to put into a house. We had a peach box, tipped on its side with a little radio on. We had a divan, which by the way is still in use, because it was a Koehler. It was beautifully built, and Renee when she had it in her garage waiting to have it recovered, a man came up and offered her \$1,200 for it when it was in rags. So she has carried that all over the United States, and it's up in Delaware now. Which I think is interesting.

Joan: So you came here and you didn't know anybody. So how did he go about setting up his practice with Dr. Unruh?

Margaret: Well, for three months, I think it was, he worked across the street above the old Smith Confectionary (117 E. Sixth St.).

Rosetta: That's where Dr. Unruh was?

Margaret: No, that's where Rene was. Dr. Unruh was up above where Watson's is (124 E. Sixth). Rene was after Dr. Iserman and Dr. Smith and Dr. Unruh. I really don't know how come they...I remember as a child, it seems like doctors were always upstairs. I never could figure that out. They both decided that it would be a lot easier for the patients if they were downstairs. So that's when they moved east of the Ford Garage (306 E. Sixth). We cleaned that place up and laid new floor and linoleum and made some curtains and made it into a...well, it was a very efficient office. There was nothing wrong with it. It worked great. Why we didn't stay there is another story which you may not or may want to know.

Joan: Of course I want to know the story of why you moved! How long were you there?

Margaret: Well, we were there I suppose a couple years. I won't mention names.

Joan: Are we still in the '50's or have we moved up into the '60's?

Margaret: No, this is still in the '50's. The man who owned it, after we fixed it all up, he would raise the rent. Well finally, my husband went to him and said, "Look, this is getting a little high. I'm trying to make a living." And the man said, "So am I." So he said, "I'm not concerned with your living, but I am concerned with mine." So he came home and said to me, "I'm going to build an office." So I did something that was terrible. I don't know if you want to put this in there. I was so mad at the man because Bert (*Bertha*) Unruh and I had scrubbed floors, and we washed windows, and we had made curtains. We had done all this to make this place attractive and workable. So I went there one night and I put a hex on it. And you know, he wasn't able to get that place rented for about a year. And then I felt kind of bad.

Joan: Was this Mr. Rumsey? And Dr. Unruh and your husband were together?

Margaret: Yes, they were. It really worked so well. Dr. Unruh was about ten years older than Rene, and just enough older to have more experience. They just got along real well. Probably because they both were in the war and seen a lot of...nothing much shocked them. That's another thing that made a difference, I think. I mean everything that was brought up, they'd seen worse. They got along fine.

Rosetta: How did the community accept the new young doctor?

Margaret: Well, there was one woman who said. . . well, I'll preface this because actually we were accepted very well, I think. But you know how I am, I think everything is great. But somebody told me that they asked this one woman if she had seen Dr. Schnoebelen yet. She said, "No, he's too much Sinatra for me." Well, he had a little moustache...

Rosetta: Now, Rene was Catholic. Did you have any problems coming into this community? Of course, there were a lot of Catholics, but was there any prejudice?

Margaret: Now listen, I don't know if you should put this in, because I don't want to offend anybody. Dr. Unruh was Methodist, and there a lot of Methodists here, and they really, um, well, the Methodists were on the school board and they had a lot of power. So when we came, however, we didn't give it much thought when we came actually until we had settled down. Rene said, "You know, I think I can make it. Make a living here." He said, "Between the Catholics and the Mexicans, I think they'll come to me, and I think I can make it."

Well, one of the first ones that came was a really lovely Mexican family here. Their name was Molina, and you may remember them. They looked like Spanish royalty. They had the fine features

and everything. But Mrs. Molina couldn't speak English. So they came to Rene, and she had something done. She told her husband to ask how much the office call was. So Rene said, "Six enchiladas!" And the next time they came they brought him six enchiladas. But we knew them real well.

Joan: At that time period, were there other people that paid the doctor bills by...

Margaret: One family, they gave us chickens, but he just couldn't charge them anything, and he didn't. But about once every few weeks or a month she'd bring a chicken. But no, because at that time, office calls were two dollars a call. So you know, most people really could handle that. Rene didn't very often send out a bill, unless they wanted it, because he said, "Really, basically these people always come in and pay me." Rene was a . . . I don't know how to explain him. . . but he was a common man. He was a man of the soil; he was a man of the earth; and I think people were very comfortable with him. You know. He made friends with all the farmers because he wanted to hunt prairie dogs, and they wanted the prairie dogs killed. So that worked! I just feel that it worked out so well. We didn't know this neighborhood at all when we moved in, but Etlings were on east side and Mr. Etling was very generous with his legal advice to us. He really was. Dr. Iserman was on west side, and he looked at his teeth. Then of course if somebody needed something...we kind of fell into it. It just seemed to be a very easy way of getting started. I didn't think it would ever be this easy to establish a practice.

It took me a while to get acquainted with everybody. I don't think I really fit the pattern for a doctor's wife either because somebody told me later, "You wore Rene's shirts when you were pregnant!" Well, there wasn't much else to wear. As I look back on it, I think probably I didn't... I know somebody came around and wanted me to sign something and it was coming up for a vote and I wouldn't do it. And I thought, how could I have the courage to do that? Because this was very early in the game, we tried to put our best foot forward. We really did. Of course, we all went to church. We sent the kids to Catholic school. We did our best to show people we were honest, and we meant to stay. And Rene always did feel like he was a servant of the people. And a highfalutin term like his "profession" or something... I mean he was a doctor. He was making a living to support us. He looked at it very sensibly, and I think that helped too.

Joan: Do you think the community also appreciated having a second doctor in town?

Margaret: Yes they did. They really did. And there was too much for Dr. Unruh. There just was. See, there was no hospital here, so...I mean you didn't take turns. If they wanted a doctor, and they'd seen my husband in the afternoon or 4:00, and they wanted him at 9:00, they came here to the house. That was like that for four years. He delivered babies in Spearville hospital and would go over twice a day to make calls at the hospital. He'd get up at 7:00 in the morning and make the rounds. Then he'd come back and work till five. Then he would eat supper and then go back after supper and make his rounds again. But in that hospital over there, he and Dr. Unruh did everything: appendices, tonsillectomies, delivering babies. You know, they just did. And that isn't just so wonderful, it just was a necessity. That's the way they were taught in that day and age. So many doctors, I realize, would rather be in a larger town and have a specialty. One reason Rene wanted to be a country doctor, he said, "I'll be bored stiff with doing the same thing day after day after day after day." He said, "The things that happen to me are so interesting." And they were; they really were. He liked doing what he did. So that was what made it so wonderful.

Joan: So about what year was it when he built his office?

Margaret: That I don't know either. Well, it was sometime in the '50's (1956).

Joan: Where was it?

Margaret: Well, Dr. Wray's office was down there (807 E. 4<sup>th</sup> St.) That's where he built it. And see, the hospital was in his backyard, or he was in their backyard.

Joan: Do you know when the hospital was built then? No, we can look that up at the library. (1950)

Margaret: However, Rene did that himself. I don't know if Dr. Unruh didn't want to be part of it. Marce's (Margaret's sister) husband was the contractor, and he built the office here. Here again, we had a lot of good luck.

Rosetta: There was a hospital right across town by the Catholic Church. A two storey... (1942-1950)

Margaret: Yes, that was before we came. It must have been, like...

Rose: I have it at the library...

Margaret: People have told me about that...

Joan: So maybe during the war, did we lose our hospital? Why was he going to Spearville?

Margaret: Well, there was no place to go. I mean, before this hospital was built. This hospital was not built until in the '50's. We had no hospital. When we came, that hospital was not...that's the duplex, isn't it? There across from the Catholic Church (620 E. Sixth St.) See, that wasn't working then.

Joan: That's what I was wondering, why was there a lack because you had that little hospital. Wasn't there a hospital where Crystal Obee used to have her office? What was that? It's over there somewhere. Where the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Apartments....

Margaret: Well, that was a hospital.

Joan: That's what I thought. What's the story with that?

Margaret: In the early '50's because that was a Lutheran hospital. That was in the early '50's.

Joan: So did he work out of there too then?

Margaret: No, they all worked...

Joan: Okay, so I was wondering if during the war if there wasn't a little hospital here, or we lost it during those years.

Rosetta: Maybe that's when this one... It seems like that was during the '30's. It is not right, but I have all of that stuff on the computer.

Margaret: Okay, I'd be interested in knowing too. That hospital was very nice, and it really made me feel bad when they built another one when they did. Of course, it was small, and that's when Kinsley was bigger than it is now. It's like the churches and everything else that they built. They were built for more people.

Joan: So when Rene built his office, he would have had what, a nurse? Two nurses?

Margaret: No. He had a lab tech, a receptionist, and he and Dr. Unruh. He always trained his own lab techs, even if they were nurses. Because he said, "I know what I want. And there would be a lot of things that I would never use." So he trained them always. It worked really well, you know. It was a very efficient place, I'll say that. He designed it. And he had his own X-ray machine too. I don't know why he had that, because the hospital was here then and they had an X-ray machine. But he did. Because I think afterwards, the crate that it came in, he made a bed out of it.

Joan: And he was pretty much on call seven days a week? All hours?

Margaret: Well, no, see Dr. Atwood came fairly soon after, in the '50's. He was a devoted man, believe me. He really was. He just was a good man. I act like my husband wasn't, but he was just such a different personality, completely.

Rosetta: And Dr. Atwood had his office upstairs above the antique shop. So you were still going upstairs in the '50's.

Margaret: Yes, and then I don't know when he built his office.

Joan: So there were three doctors then by the middle of the '50's.

Margaret: Well, there were for a short time, and then Dr. Unruh died. And then we had Dr. McKim here for a while, of course. And he was a good doctor. I mean, he was a smart doctor. He was rather unusual, but he really was a good doctor. He did good work. And so they had him, but then he moved away, didn't he?

Rosetta: Then we had a series of doctors, it seems like.

Margaret: Yes, came and went. They didn't stay very long. Then Dr. Atwood, he stayed until he quit.

Joan: I went to Dr. Atwood when I first came.

Margaret: He was really a nice man. He was over-protective of us; I mean he was so kind. I remember Rene had retired before he did, so I had to go to him about an insurance policy being renewed or something. Of course, Rene had always taken my blood pressure, so it didn't make me nervous. Well, the first time I'd went to anybody else, my blood pressure shot up. Poor Dr. Atwood, it just upset him so. He said, "You'd better sit here a while and we'll come back and do it." He finally got it down. But he practically apologized that my blood pressure was up, and I know he really felt that way. Actually, I suppose Dr. Atwood and Rene were a good balance for each other. They were at opposite ends of the spectrum. They really were. Whoever didn't like Dr. Atwood would go to Rene and whoever didn't like him could go to Dr. Atwood. And I think it balanced out about right. You see, when we first came here, Rene would go out in the country. He had a nurse then, by golly, because he would always take her and they would go. I remember one night when he was way down in Trousedale. It was snowing, miserable, and this woman was really in deep tapioca. I mean she was miserable. Anyway, he said, "I really sweat blood because I couldn't do a caesarian. So here we were, and finally everything happened." Doctors took real chances then. But they had to. What else was there to do.

Joan: But people didn't sue then.

Margaret: No, they didn't, you're right, because Rene practiced all those years and was never sued until three days before he quit before his insurance ran out. And he had called another doctor to assist at an appendectomy, and so when this man sued him, he went to a lawyer, and the lawyer said this was known as a nuisance suit. Well they sued, deliberate, because the hospital was run by the Lutherans then. They sued the Lutherans, and they sued Rene, and they sued the doctor who was helping him, and they sued the hospital, besides the Lutherans. Anyway, the whole thing was \$10,000, and that's why they called it a nuisance suit. Really, after the lawyer's share, everybody else wins \$2,000. Well, Rene and this doctor said, "We're not doing it. We didn't do anything wrong, and we're not paying it." And of course, their insurance would have, but it was finally thrown out of court, after it went through about three or four courts. It was finally thrown out. I was very proud of them because well, they said, "We're not having that on our record. We hadn't been sued and we're not gonna be sued and have them win it." And that's how it went. And the thing of it was, I didn't know then that if a party sues you, they can put a lien on something. And they put a lien on our office. And when I went to...well, I guess somebody wanted to buy it or something, I couldn't sell it because there was a lien on it. So I went to a lawyer and said, "Well, don't they have to tell me?" And he said, "no". I didn't know that. But anyway that worked out all right too.

Joan: I know from other discussions with you, that Rene was doctor to the Hispanic community. We did have black families at that time. What was your viewpoint of the minorities in town? I know you've described living conditions...

Margaret: Well, when I was living in Wisconsin, we just never had any. So this was all new to me, so it was just interesting more than anything else. Shade sang with the Winchester boy (*The Winchesters were a black family*). He had a good voice and she had a good voice. Somebody even, back then they took offense at that.

Joan: Was Shade, that year would have been?"

Margaret: Shade's 62 years old now.

Joan: I'm trying to think. You told us that. She was born in in '47, and this would have been when she was a teenager? So this would have been '50's on?

Margaret: I do think that, well, the Mexicans were looked upon, for whatever reason, I don't know. I never could figure it out because I came from a different area and didn't understand it. Of course, the first time Renee ever saw a black man...he was...who was it that also did housework?

Rosetta: Skeet Winchester

Margaret: All right, and he was working for Etlings. He went over there and did work, and Rene, of course, was back and forth over there to Etlings. Margaret Etling told me that, she came in, and she looked at him and she said (she was only five or six years old), "My, you have a beautiful tan!" We just never had any feeling about it. I think Rene probably did, having been raised in Oklahoma.

Rosetta: So, as a newcomer to the community, you could see prejudice?

Margaret: Yes. I sure could.

Joan: How about...were there any problems with blacks or Hispanics coming to the same doctor's

office as the whites?

Margaret: Not to our office there wasn't. In fact, the last lab tech he had was a Spanish woman, but we had ... that time when that Spaniard lived off on Freddy Charlet's (1699 80<sup>th</sup> Ave.). (Over the years) he hired a number of people then, and a lot of them really couldn't speak English. But they came to Rene for whatever reason, I don't know. He said they'd come in and poke their throat and he didn't know if they had a fish bone in it or if it was just sore. So he hired this woman. He hired her even though she didn't know anything about the lab. She said, "I can't believe you want me." And he said, "Well, I do," he said, "because you're going to be a great help whether you know it or not!" He taught her laboriously how to do these things, and of course she was bright and smart, and she could do it. But you know, I never saw anything like that.

Joan: Well, you know, in other places in town, they had to use the back door. They were served in the back, rather than in the front. But the doctor's office was a...they'd go and sit in the waiting room?

Margaret: Yes, they'd sit right in the waiting room next to anybody else. Which is wonderful.

Joan: I know you told me the story about going over to the railroad workers' place anyway, though this may have been a little later, remember where there was tuberculosis? Do you want to tell that?

Margaret: These people that worked on the railroad, they lived on the other side of the tracks. They were block houses, and there were a lot of them. But Rene, evidently here again, he must have made house calls there, but so many of the people he treated had tuberculosis. And when he went over there, he knew why. He said the houses were dank and damp, and they were just were awful. At that time, Rosetta, did we have a county doctor? You remember Sarah Zeller? She was our county health nurse. Did they have a county doctor?

Rosetta: Not that I know of. I just remember the county health nurse because she went around to all the different schools and you had to have your teeth checked and you had to have your shots. She made sure you did.

Margaret: Yes, he did get that done. He said, "That can't be."

Joan: What did he get done?

Margaret: I don't know who he went to even. Really, I didn't know much about his work.

Joan: Were the houses bulldozed? We haven't said on the tape what he actually did. How did he get it cleaned up?

Margaret: I don't know who he went to, but he said they've got to be knocked down. And they were. And that's when they started moving into town. They kind of did move in kind of a one spot.

Rosetta: Most of them north of the track.

Margaret: Yes, like the Molinas did, the Chacons, the Rincons, they all moved, but they were in decent homes. It sure made a difference.

Joan: They wouldn't, they couldn't probably move to the south part of town?

Margaret: I don't know.

Joan: Now, that housing was just provided by the railroad, right?

Margaret: Evidently, if you worked for the railroad, I suppose.

Joan: They were all railroad workers and it was provided and there just weren't kept up. We've had other descriptions of that housing.

Margaret: You know, we have come a long way. Just in my lifetime, or course that's just several decades. But you know, I look at even the difference in the women. As a child, I really can remember. And I can remember Mama telling me. She said, well, Mama was kind of ahead of her time. She didn't like this business where women were put upon and used a chattel more or less. She said she could remember saying to her mother, "Where did Papa go?" "Papa went to town to vote." And that was that. My folks were always interested in the things, for whatever reason I really don't know. But I can remember them taking me to the town meetings when an issue was coming up. Now I look on that, and I think golly, that was wonderful that they were interested in it. I suppose that's why I am, up to a point.

Joan: I was thinking while you were talking, your husband picking a house out and a town without communicating. There was something else you said that he did...

Rosetta: Joining the navy.

Joan: Yes, joining the navy. Today, most couples would confer over these things.

Margaret: They certainly would. Like Renee and Jerome going up to Delaware. It took both of them, and it took them a year to find what they wanted. But they did it together. And the only time I really put my foot down, Rene's father was up here helping him. The door that goes into the hall, that actually went into the basement. It was constructed so that the hall was a . . . well, the girls called it the dark hole of Calcutta, and that's just about the way it looked. Grandpa came up and was helping Rene. They were doing this together. We did a lot of it ourselves. I came home and said, "My gosh, what are you doing?" "Dad," he said, "thought we'd have a lot more room if we nailed up this door." And I said, "Rene, I can't stand that." And I said, "I think it would be better if you told him instead of me telling him." So he did, but that's the only thing that I stood up for.

Rosetta: I know that we used to have horse shows down in front of the old grand stand. And then a few weeks later, we had football practice down there. And your husband got that stopped. That's the story I've been told.

Margaret: Yes, he did.

Rosetta: Because he didn't think it was very good for the football boys to be playing where the horses had just been.

Margaret: Yes, I do remember that because he came home, and we had kind of an argument. But he said, "No, it can't be." I'm always amazed, and I realize that the thing I admired so about Rene was his being able to stand up for what he believed in. And I always felt real safe with him, even when he had Alzheimer's. If he was in the car beside me, and I could drive, but as long as he was there, I felt I could have gone anyplace. And I really did, it was just that he made me feel good.

Joan: That's two things, getting the railroad houses demolished and then the football field. Are there

any other issues in town that you can think of?

Margaret: No, I can't. He was a city commissioner, and now I can't remember anything. He was a bank director, and of course, he was the coroner for a long time too. He said, you know, the coroner was so many times the mortician. He said really, you need someone with medical knowledge. Because so many times people die for rather odd reasons, and you really need to know. So he was that for a long time, I remember. He kind of enjoyed it. He said it was very interesting. I remember one year we went to Canada to a meeting. He wanted to go to some special meeting about coroners. So we did.

Joan: Is there anything else on the medical community that we need to discuss. You saw some polio? And the shot came in while you were here?

Margaret: Yes, I remember. The divan was over against that wall, and a woman came to the door and her little boy was sick. Of course I was one of those to open the door and say, "Come on in." So, the little boy had polio, and of course I didn't know it, and he threw up. The kids weren't in here, but they were dashing around. And I don't know where he sent him. I can just remember his voice, "That little boy has polio." And of course I just sweat blood for about two weeks. I was just so afraid my children would get it. I remember we had just sanded the floor in the den, and somebody had an accident at 10:00 at night and bled all over the floor, so we sanded it again. Those were just things that you did in that day and age. And it isn't that we did anything unusual. I don't mean to act that like that.

Joan: It is unusual for this day and age. It is good to remember that and put it down. That this was not unusual, but it did happen.

Margaret: Well, this is another funny thing. I won't mention it here again. But an 8<sup>th</sup> grade girl had broken a finger. And she came into the office, and that's when we were east of the Ford Garage. She told me this herself. She said he looked at her hand and said, "Yes, it's broken. But you've got such little fingers, I couldn't put a cast on it." So he whipped out his knife and went out in the backyard. And when he came back he had a shingle and shaved it off. The nurse put alcohol on it. He put it over her hand, bandaged it up and said, "Come back in a week." She said it worked great.

Joan: Can you think of other ways that he made do with the limited...?

Margaret: I wish I could remember this one thing he did. Some man had swallowed ground glass by mistake. He had made something with a big syringe and pulled it out of his stomach. Because he said, "By the time we get him to a hospital, he'll be dead." Because of the bleeding from... The doctors just did... For Rene, however, I think the best education probably was the war...

Joan: Well, you came from Muscoda? Besides moving here, what were the differences you saw?

Margaret: Well, this was a bigger town. Muscoda was a thousand. And I'd never seen these big elevators before. We have silos at home; we didn't have elevators. And the first time I came here, I said, "Apartment buildings? This is a big town." Well, I found out it wasn't an apartment building. Well, the first time, and this was before the war, before we were here, but I'd never seen bathrooms for colored and white. And I went into this place, and I thought, "Is that one pink and is this one white? Is that one blue and this one white?" It's a good thing I didn't go into the colored. Really, I had no idea. I just went into the white because I thought that was pretty safe, you know? But then he told me, and I thought, "That's really nifty, all colored bathrooms." I'd gone through college, but it isn't that I'd just fallen off the turnip wagon. I'd been around a little bit, but I'd just never seen things like that. The furthest south I'd been was Iowa, and you know, you didn't travel then like you do now. Like I said, at

Marce's memorial, they came from Virginia, Delaware and Florida, and really didn't make much of a fuss about it. But then, you just didn't do it.

Joan: So you moved to this town, which was bigger. Which was probably nice. Of course you would have had electricity here and water and sewer and all that. All the modern conveniences. Out in the country there were people who didn't have all those things during this time period.

Margaret: Our town, Muscoda, didn't have a sewer system when I was little. You had to put in your own sewer. And they had their own water system.

Joan: When Rene went out in the country to doctor, he might have gotten into that. Because you know, there wasn't electricity in...

Margaret: When he was in his residency, I was married to him then, but he came home one day and said, "I've just delivered the cutest little baby. The woman gave birth in an outhouse, and I fished it out with the poop and everything. I asked if they had any oil at all, and yes, they had cooking oil. I washed that little thing off, and it cried like crazy." The girl had never told her mother.... He did a lot of that stuff, and that's what his residency in Muskogee, Oklahoma, was like too, I'll tell you. Because I think in Muskogee, about a third were on welfare. It was a poor. And about a third were Indians, and a third were white. He saw a lot of really odd things.

Joan: So you got a telephone when you moved here. What about television? When did you get television?

Margaret: We didn't get television until Renee was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. She came home from school and said, "Mother, I'm the only person in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade without television." We looked at each other. We'd never missed it. But we got a television. We thought, you know, maybe she is missing something. But yes, we didn't have television here. We were among the later ones.

Joan: Were there any other changes in that time period of the '50's and '60's? Changes in the community? Or what you had...

Margaret: Rene, he was on the city commission. He threw himself into things as well as he could because he was just too busy. But I did a lot of things, and I liked people. I still do. Well, that goes on here. I was going to tell you about that when you asked what we did for entertainment. Shall I go into that or not?

Joan: Sure.

Margaret: Well, you know, we kind of made our own entertainment. They had a skating rink here, and in the wintertime, watered the pond in the park down there... I don't know what it was called, but the kids would go down there, and adults too. And they'd skate. There was the music club, if you want to call that entertainment. I didn't. But bridge clubs were big at that time, and these women would give these huge bridge parties. When Jessie Coover lived up in the big house here. Of course, they had the gun club, which was the oldest in the state, and that's still going, and was the golf club always here?

Rosetta: I just looked that up. They've had a golf club since 1927. And maybe a little before that. It was at different places.

Margaret: And let's see, what else... And it is entertainment, to be able to go out to Mulligan's, where they have a bar, and have a drink. Well, if you wanted a drink, you went to a bootlegger. It was dry

when we came here. They didn't sell anything, did they, beer or anything here?

Rosetta: I'm not sure when they... I know that they've always had a pool hall.

Margaret: Well, maybe they did sell beer...

Rosetta: I don't know what they sold in the pool hall.

Margaret: I don't know either. I never asked. They had a women's club.

Joan: In a dry county, you could have private clubs. Maybe the pool hall at times was that...

Rosetta: I think that's right. It could be, I just know we've always had one. Way back, they always called it a pool hall, or a billiard hall.

Margaret: I think that it is entertainment, to be able to go out and have a drink. People do it for entertainment. Go out to eat and have a glass of wine or something. We just didn't have that here. So, like I said, you made your own entertainment. You entertained people and did that sort of thing because there wasn't any...

Joan: You were involved in the church.

Margaret: Yes, and that was part of the entertainment. Like the Christmas plays the kids did and all...

Joan: Now, your children went to the Catholic church? And how big were their classes?

Margaret: Yes, well, three times as big as they are now, that's for sure.

Joan: When you were in the Catholic school, was there one classroom per grade or...

Margaret: No. The first Catholic school that the girls went to was a two room house with four grades in each room, or something like that. The nuns did it.

Joan: Was it in the same area by the church there?

Margaret: Right by the church. It was this little house. The nuns did that.

Joan: So there were just a few children at that time.

Margaret: No, there were quite a few.

Rosetta: There was a catholic school out at St. Peter and Paul's, and they had a school.

Margaret: And by the way, when you're talking about entertainment, I don't know if you remember this. I remember it because I guess most of the adults had dances out there at St. Peter and Paul, and now they did have beer. I know that's why they had such a good time. That was entertainment. In the summertime, they had it on a cement slab.

Joan: Okay, we're going to get pretty big changes in the Catholic Church and the school at this time. When you came, it was two room house, with maybe what, 20 kids?

Margaret: More, because there was like... Jerry Felder, Renee, Stephanie Heit, Teresa Heinz. No, I imagine there were 50 or 60 kids in there. There must have been three rooms in that, there had to be. *(In 1953 when the new school was built, the enrollment was 93 pupils.)*

Joan: Did the Catholic...or was that because of consolidation with other Catholic schools or? Did the population here get to be more?

Margaret: No, the population was 2,500. And the thing of it is that there weren't a lot of Catholics, but they had a lot of kids. Like now, the Catholics have two or three kids. The Frames are unusual. I mean really that's fine; they have a wonderful family. But back then, you look at Odessa Schaller, she had seven. Sally Heit had six. Dennis Hatstrup had twelve.

Joan: So that generation had a lot of children. So you needed a bigger school for that reason.

Rosetta: You had a priest that pushed it too. Father Herklotz?

Margaret: Yes.

Rosetta: He was a local boy. I think he kind of pushed it.

Margaret: They gave them money for the gymnasium, maybe. And so then they built that. And see, the priests' house was just a little old house. So they first built the school and the gym. Then they built the priests' house *(1955)* which made me happy that they did the school and the gym first.

Joan: And then you said that it was taught by sisters? And they had a house also?

Margaret: Yes. That was on the corner right north of the church.

Joan: So how many sisters were there?

Margaret: I believe three, maybe four.

Joan: So three or four sisters and a father who lived (in the rectory)?

Margaret: And of course the priest taught some religion at that time, and the sisters... There were like four rooms at least, and you had two classes in each room. Have you ever been over in that gymnasium?

Joan: Yes.

Margaret: They did a good job, I always felt that when the kids entered public school that Father Herklotz *(served from 1950-1965)* was with them; he was great for sports. You remember Lucille Gleason's boys, such wonderful basketball players. But they had good basketball teams, and the priest was in there working too.

Joan: At this time, the parochial school, was it just to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade? And then they went to high school?

Margaret: Just to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, then they went to high school. And for years, the bus didn't pick up the Catholics. And I don't know what brought that about either. But finally one year they picked up the Catholic kids.

Joan: That's something we haven't touched on. Did you feel prejudice as a Catholic moving here?

Margaret: No, I didn't, but my skin's about this thick. You really can't go by me. Things like that, they're just not worth worrying about to me. I mean, if somebody didn't like me because I was a Catholic, I sure didn't want to know them. I mean, just because they were so narrow. I didn't care what they were, so I'm not really a good judge of that. I never felt like it made any difference. One woman said to me, and she never became a Catholic, her husband was, and she said, "You're going to have a hard time. Being a Catholic." Of course, we had so many Catholics up in Wisconsin that... And I think it was about this time that things started changing.

Joan: When you came back from WWII when people were not as narrow minded as they had been before WWII.

Margaret: Really, it's just like the fact that Rene could be a city commissioner, and I was on the school board. Those were all things that a Catholic did not do... and I think that was because things were changing, thank God.

Joan: Now, when were you on the school board? How many years ago?

Margaret: Late '60's and '70's? It was when we did the consolidating.

Joan: Can you talk a little bit about that? The feelings of community when that was going on?

Margaret: Well, I think Offerle, sooner or later knew they were going to have to do something. We had talked about consolidation with Lewis, and Lewis didn't want anything to do with us. And they, well, I guess they're better now. No, but anyway, Offerle were amenable to this. And I was on the board when it happened. I remember the night when we had a vote on it. I was for it, but I didn't want, this was like in March when we were voting on it. And we were wanting to get this done in time for school in September? We pushed this around, and so I abstained. I didn't vote against it, I just didn't think we could get this put together by... I mean it takes... I was the only one that abstained or, it went through anyway, but that first year the teachers were more like baby-sitting than they were being teachers. They just couldn't... I came home and Renee and her dad were on the couch. Of course they both asked what happened and I told them. And "What did you do?" "I abstained." "You're yellow!" they said. "Why did you say no!" and I said, "I'm going to go and get a drink." I was so mad. Here I stood up for what I believed in, and I did see the minutes. Then Offerle put in a new sewer system, and we had to help pay for it because the school was then in the district. They probably thought of that, but it was going to have to be anyway, sooner or later. It just had to be. And I think it has worked quite well, don't you? I do. But it took a little while to do it. And then of course there were people who were mad about it for various and sundry reasons, but I'm all for anything that will improve education, and if this was going to help it, good night, be sure and do something then.

Joan: I'm trying to think. I know you served on the library board too, was that later?

Margaret: I was on that when it was built, I think.

Joan: That's the '50's, right. That building bond issue only passed by a couple votes.

Margaret: Yes. You know what you said here. I think the library is one of our real plusses. And my girls do. When they come home, they say, "Mother, this library offers anything that you can find in a

city.” They just think it is wonderful. And I don’t know why people wouldn’t vote for it. The land was given to them, wasn’t it, by Mr. Lippoldt. And you know that in itself was a plus. And the fact that we put the fire station, the city building, the library...it was sensible. I’m surprised we were so sensible, actually. Really. And it has been wonderful. Of course, later on when the fire station got too small, they moved it, and we made that into the meeting room. It was just wonderful again. It worked out great. I know lots of people who had their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, their birthday party there and it’s really great!

Joan: And that building I think there is 1955. Before that there was not a...the city did not own a building for a library. They rented a facility, or put it above city hall.

Margaret: Do you remember where it was? You went upstairs and I don’t think it was as big as this room, do you?

Rosetta: It always seemed extremely small. But then, you know, I didn’t have anything to compare it with except the school library.

Margaret: I didn’t either, because our library in Muscoda was very small, so you know, it sounded good to me if it had books.

Joan: What you built was really a Cadillac little library.

Margaret: Right. I’m just surprised that the way we planned that stayed sort of in line with... of course, it is due to you two people and what you have done, and what you offer, and how you have presented it.

Rosetta: The furniture is still the same.

Joan: The quality of the building and the furniture is what has made it last.

Margaret: Well, when you said entertainment, that’s just about what we did. And you know, our entertainment was at home. It really was. But we had, like I said, the bridge club, the women’s club, the roller rink...and then they did have dances in the pink building (South Park).

Rosetta: That was also a skating rink at one time.

Margaret: Was it, I didn’t know that. But they held dances out there, because I can remember when I...of course, I was, I came from a wet state. So if you wanted a drink, you drank like a lady. And everybody was always going out to the car, and I never could understand why. Well, I found out why. You know, there’s a bottle. Good night, this wasn’t my cup of tea.

Rosetta: When did you learn to play the organ? You played the organ at the church, when did you learn to play? Did you take piano lessons or organ lessons?

Margaret: I had piano lessons when I was in the grades. Mama thought we ought to have piano lessons. And of course, it didn’t take with Marce. But the teacher finally said to my mother, she said, “There’s no point in spending your money because Marce has too good an ear.” Marce would make the piano teacher play the piece, then she’d go home and play it in a different key. And that’s how the piano teacher knew what she was doing! But I plodded on as best I could. I waded through Bach’s two part inventions. But I worked, and when I came here, Sally Heit was playing the organ. I don’t know,

maybe she had another baby or something, for some reason or another, I started playing the organ. It was a pump organ, and she directed the choir. And actually, we had a nice choir. Sally was a wonderful director. She just was a natural; she honestly was. She and I got along slick. I liked her and she liked me, and it worked.

Joan: How big was the choir?

Margaret: Well the choir at that time was 12 or 14 people. Of course, Sally had us practice every Wednesday night. If only six showed up, the six practiced. The rest would have to catch up. But now, if they have six up there, we're lucky. I quit when Rene got sick. I had always gone up there, and I thought poor Rene, who sat down there alone all those years. And so I quit. And now, those steps are awful. It's a good thing you don't have a hernia because you'd be in real trouble. They're little narrow things, and they wind up, and it's difficult. And I went up there for Sally Heit's funeral. I thought I'm going to sing for the last time. Now I have the heart of a robin and sing like a crow. However, I do sing on pitch. I mean, I have a good ear, but I'm not much help. But by the time I got to the top of those stairs, I was tired. Well, I decided no more. But I took organ lessons for either a year or two years and learned a lot.

Rosetta: Who was your teacher?

Margaret: Do you remember that Mike Hall? I don't think there'd be any reason, he came from Mullenville. But he could play the organ. He had a lot of talent. I took lessons from him, and I learned a lot. You know, however, oddly enough, proportionately, our church has stayed pretty much with the declining population if you did a ratio, it stayed. Where the Methodists haven't. Or the Congregational. I think the Christian does better doesn't it?

Rosetta: Maybe a little bit better than the Congregational. But we used to have a big.

Joan: Well, in the '50's and '60's, in Kinsley, were all the churches that were there then here now? Or are there any additional ones that are here now?

Margaret: Well, the Nazarene came later on. But we had one more, do you remember that one that was on 7<sup>th</sup> street? It was right by Chapin's house?

Rosetta: The church of...

Margaret: Was that the Church of Christ?

Rosetta: Yes, we had 20 churches at one time, when I was young.

Margaret: Now when we came here, I know we had, like, ten. Of course, now, we don't have that. The Episcopal closed, and the Nazarene...

Joan: So it was a combination of losing population, but also the denominations losing members-- both. On the protestant side.

Margaret: Well, and if you want to, if you read anything, people go to a fundamental church and the Catholics, they now know that they're not going to go to hell if they leave the church. You know, there was a time when fear was a great element. And I hate to even say it, but it's the truth. Now, we have a

lot of young people who have just plain left the church. And some who come when they feel like it. Of course, fortunately the priests are more understanding too. They don't give us hellfire and brimstone in a sermon. It's more hopeful and so on. But I'm surprised that our church actually has kept their numbers. Every Sunday we've got to have at least a 100 or 125 people. A lot of times it's, well like last Sunday, we must have had 150 people.

Rosetta: That's wonderful.

Margaret: It is. And they give! This is what gets me. They are so generous in their donations. Now, I was talking to somebody, and she said that the Methodists didn't know what they were going to do with stone around their neck (*a large church building*)? And I know that when we had the school, we just barely made ends meet. But see, we're not paying insurance, we're not paying healthcare, we're not heating the school. So now, our donations all go to the church, and we're able to make church repairs that needed to be done years ago. We just didn't have the money, but now we do.

Joan: So in the '50's, would there have been about the same number of people attending the church?

Margaret: Ratio-wise, yes.

Joan: You would have had more than 150 people?

Margaret: I think so because you see, now St. Peter and Paul is closed. Of course, there aren't as many farmers as there were, but we get those people.

Joan: Well, the Belpre church closed, or are they still having services?

Margaret: Belpre has church. And Offerle has church. Offerle used to have a church, and school. And they had a resident priest. That doesn't happen anymore. And understandably so. But I'm just amazed at our attendance, I really am. And I really don't know why the Methodists have fallen so terribly.

Joan: Well, I think it's probably more the protestant denominations, the main-line denominations are just losing to the more evangelical ones.

Margaret: Well, I had a relative, and she didn't tell me for years, but the last time she was here, she said, "I'm going to a different church." And I said, "Good. How wonderful that you go to church. What is it?" And she said, "Well, it's part of a fundamentalist thing." I don't know about the fundamentalist. I don't know enough about it. But I think a lot of young people especially like those kinds of churches. They don't like regimented religion. The Catholics have ... if it isn't bad if you miss Mass or something. I mean, you really should come, but they're not going to raise hell if you don't. I think that's made a difference in the Catholic Church, even though, well, I'm always gripping about something that I don't like, and that's not nice. But there are things that certainly should have been approached and taken care of and not swept under the carpet, like it was for so many years. And they claim they hadn't done those things. This is a poor comparison, but it's sort of like, some people have rejoiced in that. And were glad to see this happen, but it's sort of like when the Ford company didn't take money from the government. Really, you know, that was so nice that people started buying Fords. I think that happens. But the Methodist Church was never that rigid, so, I don't know. Well, I feel so terrible about the Episcopal Church.

Joan: Because you've got churches with an older population and the population that is left here is older.

So those are the ones who have kept all the churches going. The younger ones are not...

Margaret: It's the older ones and further on that have asked questions about...

Joan: The future of Edwards County?

Margaret: Yes, I don't when you want to talk about that...

Joan: Now is fine!

Margaret: Well, you know, I felt so bad about the Duckwalls (*Variety Store*) because the people it had the most impact on are people like me. I can't drive to Wichita anymore. I can drive till I get to town, and then I have to have somebody drive me. But this was so handy. Now I can't buy a dish towel or a pair of socks. I can't buy yarn; I can't buy lipstick for heaven's sake. It's gone, and it has a terrible impact on people like me, like I am. And there are a lot of us. And I think when you say here, "What's the future?" I think there's hope. And of course, I a hopeful person, but I look at what they offer us. We have an excellent hospital. We have doctors that come, I don't have to go to Wichita. There's this doctor for my macular degeneration; I don't have to go to a psychiatrist, (*but if I did*) they come here. You've got a wonderful dentist. You've got an eye-man. Now, what more could you ask? We have a library that is top-drawer. That's all there is to it. We have a grocery store, and he'll do anything for you! If you want to go over and get black rice, it's "Just a minute, I can order that for you, it you'll have it Thursday." I just think we have a lot going for us if people will look at that. I think, and I even went to the economic development, because I wanted to know if they got a grant, what you have to do. But I think the most important thing is to keep what we've got. If we can just keep it like it is now. If we can get a store...and I don't know if we can do it. But I look at the Dorothy Airgood's store (*hardware store, 211 E. Sixth St.*), and even though you know she has a lot of stuff there that people need and buy, but how long is she going to be able to keep it up? And I think the other thing, and I don't know what you think about this, it's just like what President Obama said last night. He was talking about changing attitudes. He said it has to start with the parents. Well, give me a break. You aren't going to tell parents what to do. They aren't going to listen, and half of them don't give a hoot. And you know, yes, it should start at home. I know how much we influenced our children. Some probably not as good as it should have been. But I know why they're interested in politics is because Rene and I were. And I know why they went to church, is because we did. And I wish they could clean up this town.

Joan: Physically, you mean.

Margaret: Yes. Just like the houses across the street from Ralph Pool. Now why on earth, they can't condemn that, I don't know. So tear it down. But that's what people see when they're coming to town. When they come in from the south there where Cheryl lives, and I don't know whose junk that is next to Coon Creek there. But it's a pile of junk. I mean if they don't want that, plant some trees or bushes, something so that when people come into town to have a pleasant approach.

Joan: And you think your husband might have had a different opinion when he came over the viaduct if he was coming over it now?

Margaret: I think he might have. I really do. You know....

Joan: He might not have stopped?

Margaret: The houses were all taken care of, I mean really, pretty much so. Like our neighborhood. Look what's happened to it, and all we need is one person to come in and not take care of theirs. Because it takes the properties down, and somebody comes and they can't sell their house, so they sell it cheaper and then the same kind comes and they leave junk in their front yard. You can't stop people from buying houses. I don't know what the answer is, but I do know this, you could make some laws and stick to them. And it seems to me you have good reason to condemn some of these homes and buildings. Now that building out there where the skating rink was, people come into town and look at that mess. And thank God you came to this nice little museum and that's a help. What happened?

I did write something down here -- the last forty years. Well, one thing, the people were accepting of us. Rene was able to go hunting. He was able to do these unusual things on the side which probably is the reason that he was so well balanced. He didn't keep his nose to the grindstone all the time. That, in turn, made life easier for me if he was happy. The people of the community were very accepting of us, even though we seemed to be a little on the "odd" side at times. The fact that we had small-town values that we could instill in our children, and felt comfortable with the people surrounding us. There was a Catholic school here which we knew people were interested in education. So that made a difference. Let's see, is there anything else. I guess not. And I told you I do have hope for the future. I think maybe we've hit a plateau in our population. I read in the paper today you know, how many people that Connie Oliphant (*CPA*) has hired and they've moved into town. And of course Connie, I just hope she still has time to figure income tax. It looked to like she is really carrying an awful load. Of course, that's what we need. People like Mrs. Watson (Shirley) who is a pusher like Connie. If you had enough of those, it's nice if they're also real rich. But I do know this, that if you get enough people together, and inspire enough, and keep nagging at them, a lot of times you can accomplish more than you imagine. If you can do it.

Joan: And that's probably a good ending!