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This interview was conducted with Jean Burnet on September 9, 2005 at her home in Menlo Park, California. The interviewer is Tamara Belts.

TB: Today is Friday, September 9th, 2005 and I (Tamara Belts) am here with Jean Burnet in her home in Menlo Park, California. She just signed the Informed Consent Agreement and we will now proceed with the oral history. She has an outline that she will follow.

JB: All right. My name is Jean Burnet, and I was born on March 18, 1927, at 401 15th Street in Bellingham, Washington. There's a little story that goes with my debut. My father was a Scotch immigrant and had brought all of his family with him and as you probably know, at the early part of the century, the Scotch and the Irish did not get along well. My grandfather was the presiding physician at the birth and my mother begged him to make sure that I wasn't born on St. Patrick's Day. He managed to hold me off until a couple minutes after one o'clock on March 18th, much to my mother's relief.

Our family history in Bellingham all starts with my grandmother who was born Sevilla Cleveland in Illinois in 1865. She grew up on a farm which was on the Rock River and she used to tell about the annual spring floods that would bring their neighbor's topsoil down and deposit it on their farm and take her topsoil and deposit it on the farm below them! She said they had a different batch of topsoil every year because of the floods. She went on from the farm to graduate with a master's degree in mathematics in 1889 from DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana.

When she was at DePauw, she became a charter pledge of the charter chapter of Kappa Alpha Theta, which was the birthplace of that sorority. In later life, I ran into women who had said that when they were initiates into the Theta sorority they had to memorize my grandmother's name as part of the initiation ceremony, which was kind of fun. She had a college romance with the man who later became her husband, but in the meantime she went to have the Grand Tour of Europe after graduation. She went to the Black Forest and learned how to carve wood. I have a mirror frame and my brother has a three-panel screen and a bookcase that she carved. In their house in Bellingham, she carved panels that flanked their entire staircase to the second floor from the entry hall. She was a very serious carver.

She and her husband had been at one time students of David Starr Jordan, the first president of Stanford University. He invited them to be on his first faculty, but Grandma had already been to Lynden in the Washington Territory, where her brother, Frederick Cleveland, was practicing law. She liked the wildness of the frontier, and she thought Stanford was too "sissy-fied." When he finished his medical training in Indiana (my mother was born in Tipton, Indiana in 1892), they went right away to Bellingham where he established his practice and eventually built the house at 413 Maple Street in Bellingham. It was a three story house quite close to town, if you know where Maple Street is. After he passed away in 1927, she converted the house to eight apartments, and the last time I went down that street, it still had the sign "Axtell Apartments" on the front of the building. As far as I know, they're still there. That was where my mother grew up.

My mother married right after she graduated from the University of Washington in 1913. She married a student from Pullman, which was known as an agricultural college. He was going to be a farmer and they homesteaded in Okanogan, a god-forsaken patch of dry desert. They had nothing but jackrabbits and sagebrush as far as I could tell the one time I saw it. They also had a farm in Laurel, which now I think is part of Bellingham. My brother was born there in 1915. Unfortunately, the Spanish flu caught up with his father and my mother was widowed when my brother was only three.

By that time, my grandfather was an army doctor serving in World War I, and my grandmother had been elected to the Washington State Legislature in 1912. I believe two women were elected that year, so they were the first two. Then she ran later for the US Senate and just missed being the first woman Senator by, she said, ten or fifteen votes that were missing from out in Oak Harbor someplace. It was full of high drama in those days.

President Wilson appointed Grandmother to be the first woman to head a federal commission. She went to Washington to discharge those duties and my mother and brother went to live with her in a residential hotel in Washington. Douglas MacArthur and his mother lived there and my grandmother often played bridge with Mrs. MacArthur. Mother taught high school at Western High in Washington and had the distinction of having the first Miss America in her home room (Margaret Gorman, 1921). I think she was sixteen or something like that. She was still with us until fairly recently. Anyway, they came back - when my grandmother's duties were finished - to Bellingham and my mother and my brother Bill lived in their house on Maple Street and Mother started back teaching in the English department at what was the Normal School.

My grandmother started teaching in the first school that was out in Lynden and then it moved to Bellingham, and I think then it was called the Normal School. In my tenure at the Campus School, it was called the college, Western Washington College of Education. Then I think it went to Western Washington State College, and then Western Washington University.

Anyway in 1922 Mother started back in the English department, only taking time off for my birth in 1927, I started to kindergarten when I was four and a half so that Mother could go back to teaching. Bill was already in high school by then. I think the Campus School went through - it was called the Training School then - I think it went through eighth-grade and then he went to Fairhaven High School. I came along in 1931 to go to the Campus School. I went two years to kindergarten because I was so young. My parents decided (since I was born in March), I was either going to be the oldest kid or the youngest kid no matter what class I was in. There was to be a new substitute kindergarten teacher, so I would have had a different teacher those two years. I actually went eleven years to the Campus School because I went from 1931 on through 1942 through the ninth-grade.

Generally speaking, we were almost all the same children in the class. There were between 22 and 25 children in each grade. Some moved away and some went to different schools and new kids came in, so there was a fluctuating band of students, but the core of us all went off to high school together. You can imagine going from a class that small and with the same children for nine or ten years -- Bellingham High School was an eye-opener for us. All these wonderful strange boys with their athletic sweaters and all the people you've never seen before and you'd wonder who they were and where they came from. They came from two junior high schools; there were two junior high schools besides the Campus School.

I should say that the college physical plant at that time consisted of Old Main, Edens Hall, Sam Carver Gym, the Library and the Industrial Arts Building and that's all there was. The college students and the training school students all were going to class in the same building. In fact, the ninth-grade classroom was next to the President's office near the front door. Some of us little girls that were fourteen or fifteen (trying to get away with wearing Tangee lipstick, thinking nobody would notice), discovered that if we went out to the one drinking fountain that was there in the central hall at the entrance to Old Main during the breaks when the college students were changing classes, we could see all the eighteen and nineteen year old college freshmen with their athletic sweaters and their mysterious ways. We drank a lot of water! We spent a great deal of time going to the drinking fountain!

Kindergarten through third-grade was on the first floor above the gymnasium; the basement was the ground floor. Then on the second floor were fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth. Until we got to the ninth-grade, we didn't move from classroom to classroom. We stayed in the same room all day, but we did have special classes using teachers from the college. It started out I remember as being hobbies, and you could choose (I don't think it was every week, I think it was every other week). You could go to typing or you could go to art or you could go to industrial arts, or you could go to music. There were quite a few choices. That was when we were actually taught by college teachers.

My recollection of the Campus School is that all the teaching was done by students and the teachers – the bona fide teachers, so to speak – were observers. It wasn't the other way around. The teachers didn't teach and the students watch. The students taught and the teachers observed. We usually had two per quarter, so over the years we saw quite a few budding teachers go through. The teachers, it's odd that I cannot remember the names of two, but I can remember all the names of all the others and of course they were all single women. There was just one man who was the ninth-grade teacher and he didn't last very long.

One of the chief benefits for my brother and me was that we were faculty kids. We did all the special events that included the faculty, like every Christmas there was a faculty party at Edens Hall. I think it was on the top floor in what was called the "Blue Room." Christmas will always mean for me (I think we went beginning when we were four, five, around in there), the spotlight going on and making a circle on the floor (usually we kids were sitting on the floor or crawling around on the floor); Victor Hoppe, the head of the drama department would step into the spotlight, and he would say "*Old Marley is dead. Dead as a doornail.*" He would go on with his special shortened reading of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. You didn't have Christmas until you had Vic Hoppe saying "Old Marley is dead." There was also caroling; we had students come at five, six in the morning. Of course, it wasn't really at Christmas because they were home on vacation, but they would come and carol in the dark to each faculty house and we had quite a show on Fifteenth Street because Sam Carver lived across the street and Herbert Ruckmick, the industrial arts man, lived two doors down so we got quite a nice little concert. Then there was the spring tea for the faculty wives and women and they took their daughters. There was a weekly faculty night at the swimming pool. My dad used to take me swimming at Carver Gym. There were lots of advantages to being faculty children.

That's how our family happened to join forces with Arthur Hicks and his wife Bernice and daughter Clarimonde. Dr. Hicks was the head of the English department and had quite recently gotten his PhD from Stanford. I think Clarimonde was eight when they moved to Bellingham and lived in an apartment on South Forest Street. They eventually built a house a couple of doors down. By that time, my relatives from Scotland had pretty much dissipated and we were just a one-child family. My brother had gone off to college, of course. We spent our holidays together and sometimes a little bit of summer vacation. We were very close. One of the big memories is when the Hicks first moved to the neighborhood, we would wake up in the dark in the morning and hear his feet pounding down the sidewalk because he ran every morning, and that was very unusual in the Thirties. He's well known for walking and reading. I think until the very end he always walked to and from school, always reading.

One of the advantages of going to the Campus School was that we had special classes. A college teacher taught music, and then she also conducted the junior high school orchestra, which I played in diligently for three years. We also had the advantage of having classes with Herb Ruckmick, for instance, who taught us auto mechanics and photography, how to develop film and print pictures and make pinhole cameras. He went on to a very illustrious career as a civilian employee in photography with the Navy in Washington. We also had the art teacher from the college who taught us many kinds of art, from papier maché to water colors to oils. I'm pretty sure we went once a week to handwriting class with Miss Gragg. I've noticed as I've kept in touch with my Campus School classmates, all of us have quite distinguished handwriting, and I think it's because we were kind of busting out from her strict rules! There was a typing teacher, if you could imagine, on the college level and we all were exposed to typing, so we all came out of the Campus School being able to type, which was certainly a great advantage.

The impact on all of us from going from such a close little community to such a big high school was something that I think I'll always remember, particularly since it was during war time and there were odd things like shoe rationing and food rationing. I wore wooden clogs half of the time in high school because I was saving my leather shoes for when I needed them. We had a teen canteen downtown in the YMCA building that had to be maintained. It was on Friday nights only, I think. We shared the space with the USO, who had it on Saturday night, and then they had a Sunday canteen for the servicemen that were in town.

Another aspect of being a faculty child, and particularly my mother's child, was that she was responsible for the publication of the weekly newspaper *The Collegian* and the yearbook, which was the *Klipsun*. The people in her journalism classes used to come once a quarter to have a party at our house. It was always lots of fun and my father was pouting around because they all called him Frank, but they called my mother "Ma," "Ma Burnet." Part of the fun of that was – this was at the very end of the Thirties – some of the boys who were editors used to take me to football games. I remember Clarence Soukup, particularly, had a Model A convertible and he used to pick me up and take me to the football game over at Battersby Field in his convertible. The students seemed to stay close through the years. Finally, toward the end of my mother's life, she had to beg off corresponding with some of the editors from the Thirties -- that was forty years of correspondence.

We've got several names floating around here -- my half brother's last name is "Hussey." My mother first went to Western as Mrs. Hussey, and then she returned as Mrs. Burnet. In the meantime when my grandmother went into politics, she changed her first name, which was Sevilla, to Frances, because she thought it was a more viable name in the political arena. That's how come we have so many different names in this really quite small family. I hope that clears some things up.

After Grandmother ran for the Senate, she became a parole officer for Whatcom County and had a big shiny star badge and a big county car that was more like a boxcar on wheels the way it was designed. And you know, cars used to tip over all the time in the Thirties. One Thanksgiving we went to Vancouver for Thanksgiving Day in her big car, and all along the way to Vancouver, there seemed to be these big cars lying on their sides. They tipped over either in ice or rain. That was a time to remember because that pea soup fog that apparently appears in Vancouver every once in a while came and we got stuck in the city. We couldn't get out; we couldn't find the road back to Bellingham. I remember walking in front of the car with my hand on the fender so I could see where the edge of the pavement was and tell my father how to steer. We finally found a kindly man that said, "*Follow me, I know where I am.*" So we followed his taillights right into his garage! He said, "*Well, this is as far as I go.*" We really had no idea where we were then. Finally we found a street; we had to just leave the car. My grandmother, my mother and I had to take a street car back downtown and stay overnight. We barely got out the next day because the fog really didn't lift.

There are two special memories that I remember about my time, my age and what it was like to grow up going to grammar school in conjunction with a college and college students. Besides the drinking fountain escapades, one of my friends who was also fifteen and I noticed that all the students walked up High Street and crossed on a crosswalk in front of Edens Hall and then walked along the drive in front of the knoll and then into the Main Building. We noticed that there were a lot of college boys using that crosswalk because Edens Hall I believe was the only dorm on campus. The men had to find their own housing. So we volunteered to be there at eight o'clock as crossing guards because school didn't start until nine. We were there every morning, saying hello to our favorite ones and picking out how "*He's the cutest*"; "*No, he's the cutest*," "*Oh no, oh, no, I know the cutest one!*" We were never late, wind or rain or ice and snow didn't deter us.

I decided that my favorite of all was a husky young man who was probably eighteen or nineteen named Rolf Jensen. True to his name, he had blonde, blonde hair and piercing blue eyes and a nice tan, a husky boy. Boy, I made sure that I got to say hello to him every morning! Fast forward to 1950 and I'm in the Foreign Service working in the embassy in Buenos Aires, and someone comes into my office and says, "*There's someone to see you out in the lobby.*" And I said, "*Who?*" and she said, "*Well, he says his name is Rolf Jensen.*" If you can imagine, I just gasped. I couldn't believe it! I couldn't believe it! And there he

was. I had a roommate from Ellensburg, who also had red hair, as I did, and he squired us two redheads around town for the whole weekend and we sure turned a lot of heads with his blonde hair and us two redheads. It was quite an unusual sight in Buenos Aires, Argentina, I'll tell you.

I have one other interesting story that goes back to the drinking fountain escapades. My favorite was a football player named Pete Gudyka who was a lineman and always wore his letterman's sweater and I could usually find him on maybe one or two trips to the drinking fountain. On my fifteenth birthday, my grandmother made me a dress with kind of a Hawaiian print blue on white, square neck and a drop waist, because I probably didn't have any waist yet (and I probably had bands on my teeth). I was out in the alley banging the tennis ball against the neighbors' garage wall, as I did hour after hour (I don't know how they stood it). The cook came out and told me that mother said it was time to come in to dinner and to wash my hands in the kitchen before I went in to the dining room. I pushed open the dining room door and there, seated at a candlelit table were Pete Gudyka and his girlfriend, and the current editor of *The Collegian* and his girlfriend, his name was Al Biggs. Of course mother knew Al, and Pete's girlfriend was in one of her classes, and somehow or other she imposed on them to come to dinner, and there they were sitting at my dining room table! That was probably the most memorable birthday celebration I ever had. That's the kind of thing that can go on in a small college with a small student body and a small faculty. It certainly was wonderful for me.

When I was I think in the ninth-grade and then the first year of high school, the friend from crosswalk monitoring days, and the daughter of President Haggard and I had a trio that we called the Anjemar Trio, using parts of each of our names. I played the cello, Marcia Ireland played the viola or violin, and Joan Haggard played the piano. We regularly played in the orchestra pit before Theater Guild productions. My father seemed to be in almost every production that came along even though he was a character actor. He did things like *Abie's Irish Rose* and *Cappy Ricks* and *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, which was his supreme triumph, *Cricket on the Hearth*, and *Lady Windermere's Fan*. We played before and after and between acts.

By the time I was that age, I was cuing him and helping him learn his lines. I always knew pretty well what the script was, what was going on. One night, I think it was during *Cricket on the Hearth*, there was this loud scream, and a terrible noise and *thump, thump, thump, thump, thump*. I soon became aware that my father was on the stage by himself and he was playing two parts (just to keep the dialogue going, he wasn't acting as though he was the woman). Finally the curtain came down at the end of the act, and we sawed away on our instruments. Then someone came out from behind the curtain and said that the female lead's dress had caught fire in the heater in the dressing room which was up a flight of rickety steps and she had panicked and started to run and had fallen down the steps, and that was the *thump, thump, thump, thump*, that we heard. With not a very great lapse of time, the curtain went up and the third act went on, and here she was, in a different dress, of course, but swathed in gauze on both hands and arms, and her hair looked like it had been kind of rearranged to cover some singeing or burns. That was in the Theater Guild that was across from the museum, the Whatcom Museum of History and Art now, which was the original city hall. (There had been one that was in the Parish Hall of the Episcopal Church out on Eldridge, then I think they built their own building and I'm not sure what part of town that's in, I never was there). It was quite an experience to have had.

We also gave recitals presenting the Anjemar Trio for heavens sake. Don Bushell was on the Western faculty and later became director of the Seattle Symphony and he was my cello teacher. The girl who played the fiddle, her teacher was Mrs. Rogan Jones, who had been concertmistress of I think the Philadelphia Philharmonic and had a Stradivarius. We had good times with our music. And of course the concerts, we at that time in the Thirties (I think it stopped when travel became difficult during the war), had something called "Sol Hurok Presents Civic Music". We had the Ballet Russe and the San Francisco Symphony, and Fritz Kreisler and Artur Rubinstein and Marian Anderson; I think there was a concert every month during the winter. I don't know how they supported it because the auditorium they used first was just a little auditorium in Old Main, which I don't think would seat more than 125 or so. It was a subscription series, so maybe they made up the money that way. Anyway, civic music was an institution both for the college and for the community.

One of the sad events that affected the whole college community and town was the tragic deaths in the avalanche at Mt. Baker. There's a memorial beside Edens Hall. The news trickled so slowly and when the impact finally came that there indeed had been an avalanche and indeed had been fatalities and who they were, one of them was my mother's *Collegian* editor. It really points at the way and the speed with which news traveled in those days because we still had boys pounding down the streets in the middle of the night shouting "*Extra, extra, extra!*" whenever there was any breaking news. And that went on even until the beginning of World War II. You didn't have TV cameras and you didn't have good telephone service and the news came down very slowly from the mountain. It was a dreadful day when we were waiting to hear who had survived and who had not. It pleases me to think that the memorial is still being tended to and people stop and think about things like the vagaries of life, so to speak.

One of the big events in the lives of the Campus School students was the assemblies that Mr. Fisher, president of the college, had with us. I remember particularly always Wednesday afternoon before Thanksgiving and then one other time during the year. He was a special favorite of the children because he was kind of like a big teddy bear, kind of rumped and tall and very good humored and had a real good empathy with the younger students.

One of his sons was a contemporary of my brother's and they were often playing tennis together in tournaments or just for fun. One summer that I recall particularly, my mother engaged Chuck Fisher to give me tennis lessons every morning from nine to twelve (if it wasn't raining) on the campus courts up there on High Street. It seemed to me to be an awful long summer. It went on day, after day, after day, that poor boy! I can't imagine! After it was time to go back to school, he gave my mother a bill for \$35 for the summer, which was pretty astonishing. Until his passing, he kept in touch with my brother, who took tennis to a higher level and at 90 is still ranked in international tennis, and US tennis, too. Tennis was a big deal in Bellingham in those days. Some big name tennis players came to play, I don't know if they were charity events or what they were. The tennis court was a very busy place up there on High Street.

One of the things that my brother and I both remember is having to spend many Thursday afternoons in the print shop on the corner of Holly and Cornwall, in the basement of the bank where the *Collegian* was printed. Mother had to spend Thursday afternoons there reading galley proofs and page proofs. Of course it was all hot-type then, linotypes. We both remember the linotype typist Mr. Sutherland. He used to put our names on a slug and put a penny in the slug and we all had these little linotype things that were stamped all over my old books and so forth, just my name. Anyway, the only daylight that was in that shop came from the round chunks of glass of opaque green I think it was originally, set in the sidewalk on Holly Street. I was fascinated to sit down there and watch the feet going over the glass. It wasn't clear, and of course it was scratched from being trod on so many years, but it was almost like being underwater. It was a wonderland of looking up and seeing these round portholes so to speak and all these feet walking over them all afternoon. My brother said yesterday he thinks he spent half of his life in the print shop waiting for Mother!

We noticed big changes when the war broke out. I was riding horseback and I remember we came back, drove into the garage of a friend's home and her mother came running out saying, "*We're at war! We're at war! Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor!*" A lot of changes came about very quickly. Rationing – for instance, I remember one evening about seven o'clock there was a knock on the back door. We opened the door and there was the son of the people that owned the grocery store that we patronized and he had a hundred pound sack of sugar over his shoulder for us. He said that sugar was going to be rationed the next morning. Little did he know that we didn't bake or eat sweet things and I think we finally threw the rest of the sugar out when we left Bellingham in the Fifties! Very quickly shoes were rationed and then we had beastly food stamps to deal with.

Mother decided that she couldn't be bothered with food stamps so the three of us had dinner every night and Sunday noon at the house up the alley a little way on Sixteenth Street where an older woman who – it was a large house and just she and her husband were left -- fed, oh probably ten or twelve of the neighbors every night. We just turned our stamps over to her and then we all gathered. Daddy came from the office

and mother came usually from downtown (enrollment dropped to 400-500 at Western and there weren't enough students, to really put together a bona fide class, so Mother sold real estate and I think taught one class during the war). When we moved to North Forest Street, we were too far away... I think we still went for the Sunday dinners, but then we gathered at a mom-and-pop restaurant on State Street right in that area of the Herald Building. I remember that three course dinners were a dollar and a quarter, but we had to turn in our stamps, too.

I had to bring my food stamps when I came down to Stanford in 1945 because I started just two or three weeks after the war was over. But the gas rationing went off very quickly.

The other aspect was, I was in junior high, and I was having my teeth straightened in Seattle, which was a bad move as it turned out because with the speed limit lowered to 35 miles an hour, it took almost four hours each way to get to Seattle to the dentist. Mother had B ration stamps because of the real estate enterprise, so if somebody else drove, we had to give them some of our stamps for gas. If you took the bus, you could never sit down if you were a kid. You always had to stand all the way and sometimes it would be three or four hours. I can remember Bellingham High School won the cross-state basketball championship that year and a bunch of us girls went down and stayed in the Meany Hotel and went to all the games. But getting there and getting home – first of all, there wasn't space on the buses lots of times, and you'd have to wait and wait and wait until you could finally get on a bus to Bellingham. Then you'd have to stand the whole way. There were quite serious interruptions in what we thought was a nice, small town life.

One of the things I dimly remember was large-family life because I was the youngest child almost in my father's family; he was one of nine children. They almost all except one immigrated eventually to Bellingham and there were a lot of cousins and a lot of uncles and aunts. They were great on doing parties and what I call music hall skits. The brothers would have these tricks that they did. My father always had a lot of hand tricks that he used to bedevil me with when I was a little girl. Anyhow, we didn't celebrate with his family at Christmas because they were Reformed Presbyterians and didn't celebrate Christmas; such frivolity was sacrilegious in their view. New Years is the big Scotch party time and they observed among the family a tradition of what is called "First Footing," where you go around to your friends and your relatives and if you're the first foot in their door on New Years, then you are going to have an exceptionally fortunate New Year. That was the big thrust there. They eventually all moved on to Seattle and the cousins moved all around the west coast.

Grandmother, I think right at the beginning of the war, maybe in 1942 or maybe just before the war, sold the apartment house on Maple Street and moved to the University District in Seattle. She was 75 and my mother described her as "as giddy as a school girl going off to a new school year." She was really active in Seattle organizations – women's groups and so forth. Eventually, all that was left was our little family. My brother after the war never came back to Bellingham. He got his college degree at Boston University, living with the uncle that had started it all by practicing law in Lynden and enticing my grandmother to move out to that area.

In preparation for a system of ranking for instructors and professors at the college, the day after we got home from my graduation from Stanford in 1949, Mother enrolled in a masters program at the University of Washington and received her master's degree I guess at the end of the year. I'm vague about this because I was in Buenos Aires and I'm not positive what the timing was on that, but that was how she finished up her career at Western.

Her thesis at the University resulted in a booklet entitled *Mark Twain in the Northwest*, which included his visits to Bellingham and the area. She collaborated with Mark Twain's daughter, who was a concert pianist and was living in Berkeley at the time and she really enjoyed that connection. I'm not sure that they actually met, but they talked on the phone quite often when mother was writing and after she moved down here to Menlo Park. Her name was Clara Samossoud.

Mother's career ended at retirement in 1954 and since her mother had passed on the year before in Seattle, they felt free to move down to California where I was working in San Francisco. I always thought that

Mother really spent most of her life trying to get to California. For instance, when I was five years old, in fact, for my sixth birthday, we took a cruise I guess you would call it, on a Luckenbach ship from Seattle to Los Angeles and I had my sixth birthday in Los Angeles. It was just after the Long Beach earthquake which was so devastating. I remember driving around looking at the wreckage. There were apartment buildings and big houses with their walls just stripped off and the rooms inside were just the way the people had jumped out of bed and left them. You could see bedding on the floor and tipped over dressers and windows broken out. I've always remembered that. The trip was fraught with all kinds of possibilities and impossibilities.

I remember the day before we left, I was at home in the bathroom having my hair washed by a lady name Netty Guether, who washed my mother's and my grandmother's hair every week. Netty Guether was just finishing up when Mother burst in, out of breath and hat askew. She had gotten to the bank to get the money for the trip half an hour before Roosevelt closed the banks for the bank holiday. We hung in there and got on the boat all right.

On the boat we always had the same waiter, as you do on cruise ships usually, for gratuity purposes, I discovered. I was, as I say, five years old, almost six. The ship's band played a popular song at that time called "*Pink Elephants on the Ceiling.*" I pestered them every time we went to the dining room, every time we went to the lounge and they were playing, I would pester them to play "*Pink Elephants on the Ceiling.*" We got off the boat in Los Angeles going down the gang plank and the band struck up "*Pink Elephants on the Ceiling!*" Lo and behold! Fast forward to 1950, and I'm on a cruise ship going to Buenos Aires and the waiter (it's an 18-day trip so you talk to your waiters quite a bit) indicated that he had served on the Pacific Coast on the Luckenbach line, and I said, "*Oh, I went on a trip from Seattle to Los Angeles on a Luckenbach ship*" (I knew the name then, I don't think I do now anymore). He kind of cocked his head and he looked at me and looked at my red hair. He said, "*Did you ever know a song called ,Pink Elephants on the Ceiling?'*" We laughed all the way to Buenos Aires! Sometimes it's good to have red hair.

In 1954, my mother and father (my father had already retired) sold their house on North Forest Street and moved to Menlo Park. I was still working and living in San Francisco, but it was close enough. Mother worked for four years at Stanford, first in the registrar's office and then in the education library. After my father's death and after I moved down from San Francisco to Menlo Park, she became a reporter for the local newspaper, which was called the *Menlo Park Recorder* at that time. She covered City Hall Planning Commission and Board of Education, all with nighttime meetings and early morning deadlines. She kept that job until she passed on in 1971. She had a very full journalistic career here in California. I am reasonably convinced that she was glad that she finally got herself to California. I think she held it against my grandmother that she wouldn't come and be on the Stanford faculty.

Like her mother before her, Ruth Axtell Burnet was an avid house-remodeler, her finest moment coming in 1934 when *Better Homes and Gardens* awarded her and her husband second place in a remodeling contest. The article in the August issue, price 10 cents, states that the contest was for projects costing \$150 to \$500 and that they spent \$485.65 to convert a turn-of-the-century two storey house into a sleek Cape Cod home. Next came, ten years later, conversion of a rambling family-style home at 225 Forest Street, into two flats and two apartments. Wartime, it was a difficult project and some materials had to be bought in Canada as they were not available locally. Five years after moving to California, she was at it again, putting a 500 square foot addition on the house in Menlo Park. My ventures in this field have been modest, but I do admit to an urge to change, or add this or that. I like to think my mother would be pleased. She certainly would be pleased to know the house they bought for eleven thousand has a market value of over nine hundred thousand in today's market!

I have been interested to note as the years roll by, the comparison with how we clothed ourselves in the 1930's and today. My grandmother made most of her clothes: a spring outfit and a winter outfit. My mother and I had a seamstress who made almost all of our clothes until the late Forties. Our seamstress was named Selma Nelson and a Seventh-day Adventist. She would come on Sunday's and sew all day, pausing only for Sunday dinner with us. By the time I was in high school, Mother would order special things for me from the New York Times, mainly Best's ads, but she still bought most of my clothes (unseen by me) while

I was at Stanford, mostly from Frederick & Nelson, and even outfits to take with me to Buenos Aires. Luckily, I was a standard size. It was an exhilarating change to go to work at the White House department store in San Francisco and begin choosing all my clothes off the rack – and at a 20% discount!

Although it didn't happen often, I remember with fondness the occasions when we had heavy snow, enough to close school because the college was heated by sawdust burners and the big trucks couldn't get up the hill to fuel the furnaces. A favorite sledding hill was a block from home, the Fifteenth Street hill. A more challenging one was the run from Seventeenth Street down to the bay, perhaps on Easton Street, but closer to town than Knox Avenue, and longer. All sorts of people were pressed into duty to stand at the intersections to stop traffic as sledders whizzed by. The climb back up was too tedious for me and I stuck closer to home, sometimes chancing the Indian Street hill near school. I fondly recall that we had a white Christmas in 1948, my last Christmas in Bellingham. Early in the Thirties we often trekked across the moor to ice skate at a pond there on the Larrabee property, and before Edgemoor was developed. Skiing was primitive: my rustic skis had just leather straps to hold them to my galoshes. Mt. Baker and its lodge were rustic and quite untouched, although we were all thrilled when the movie crew came to film parts of *The Call of The Wild* and lots of us gathered to wave at the stars as they rolled through town on their special train.

That was nothing compared to when the circus train came to town! Dr. Rykken would round up his kids and their friends and take us on sunny 6 AM mornings to the station to see the animals unloaded and then to follow their parade through town to the circus grounds. I've grown up to like nothing about circuses, but when I was under ten it was the epitome of excitement.

When it was time to decide where I was going to go to college, I wanted to go to the University of Washington. I actually had been to a few visits and dinner parties at the Theta house and I thought that was my cup of tea. (When mother was a Theta at the University of Washington, they lived in a residential style house and there were eight members of Theta only, big change!). Anyway, turned out that she had applied for me to take the entrance exam to Stanford, which was held in Meany Hall at the University of Washington on a Saturday morning at 8 o'clock. (Friday night, we had a championship basketball team game at Bellingham High School, and as I was a member of the pep club, I was heavily involved. I got about maybe two hours sleep on the road. Of course, it was still war time, so the speed limit was still 35 miles an hour and it took between three and four hours to get there, one way).

I thought I was all set for the University of Washington and lo and behold, I passed the entrance exam. As a pleasant dinner conversation, my mother came up with the happy announcement that I was going to go to Stanford because I had passed the exam and I was able to go. Who wouldn't be able to go? Tuition was \$48.00 a quarter, and board and room was \$200.00 a quarter, which was ten weeks. So, off I went to Stanford. I think it was planned somehow in the stars or with somebody's urging that we were all to end up in California. That doesn't mean that I don't enjoy going back to Bellingham. I have gone; I went to my fiftieth high school class reunion and enjoyed it very much.

In August of 1949, I graduated from Stanford, and my grandmother came down for my graduation. She had graduated from DePauw in 1889 and here I was graduating from Stanford and there, still living at Stanford was the second Mrs. David Starr Jordan, whom we called on. There were a couple of professors, I think they were emeritus professors by that time, who had been at DePauw with her, so it was quite an event.

For the trip home, I don't know how we all got in the car. There were four of us and my roommate who came back to visit Bellingham. It was a 1941 Chevrolet, and if you've ever seen one of those, ... and considering there was luggage besides, I can't imagine how we sat crammed in that car for two days!

My brother had a government career after he'd graduated from Boston University. He was what they called a "90 day wonder;" (quickly produced ensigns in the Navy). I think he went to Harvard for his training and became an ensign in the Navy in 1942. He served mainly on minesweepers in the north Atlantic -- which was very hazardous duty with those little ships -- until he was transferred to the Pacific theater. There he became an aide to Admiral Shafroth, who was on a cruiser.

In fact, just this past weekend, September 2, Bill has gone to the sixtieth anniversary of the signing of the Japanese surrender aboard the *USS Missouri* in Tokyo Harbor. At ninety, he figures he was probably just about the only one there who actually participated in the ceremony. Although there were quite a few people who had been crew members, he didn't discover anybody else that actually was part of the ceremony. After the end of the war, he transferred to the regular Navy and served in Panama, again with Admiral Shafroth. Then he switched to the State Department /Foreign Service and served I think about six or seven years in London, then in Munich, then in Burma, Thailand and Togo. He discovered the body of the assassinated president of Togo, who was assassinated about the same time John Kennedy was. Let's see, Malawi and Lesotho... then he switched to the United Nations and was representative of the United Nations in Samoa – Western Samoa, then he later had some duty in American Samoa and I've forgotten what the distinction was between those two. Then he opened the first embassy in Mauritius, so he had a full military career and also a State Department career.

He then, after retirement, was I believe vice president of the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. He was in charge of protocol and making all the arrangements for the foreign visitors and so forth and working as Peter Uberroth's right hand man. They joined forces again and put on the Miss Liberty weekend in New York, celebrating the anniversary of the Statue of Liberty. So he had that kind of service.

Meanwhile, he was playing competitive tournament tennis and was nationally ranked and then eventually internationally ranked in his age group. Although he's still ranked, I think probably he's not going to be on the court any further, but he certainly has tournament experience. His training at both Western and the University of Washington stood him in good stead for a lifetime of tennis participation. His wife is also internationally ranked. They have traveled the world over playing under all kinds of circumstances and all kinds of conditions.

After some training in Washington DC, I was happy to have six months there living in a boarding house that was right at the Calvert Street bridge over Rock Creek Park and I thoroughly enjoyed the city and enjoyed the time; I was very pleased to be assigned to duty in Buenos Aires. I went down on a Carnival cruise ship, eighteen days to get there, as I mentioned. It was fun in Buenos Aires. Although the Perons were still in power, Buenos Aires seemed, at least on the surface, a rather benign place. I loved the food and loved the music. The city was magnificent and still pretty much in its prime, which I think it reached in about the 1930s when labels on cosmetics and perfume and clothing would say "*New York, Buenos Aires, and Paris.*" My roommate was from Ellensburg, and she had just had duty with the legation in Vienna. As I think I mentioned, she had red hair too, so we cut quite a swath in our fancy sublet apartment on the twentieth floor of the tallest un-reinforced concrete skyscraper in the western world I think was how it was described. There are no hills or trees to speak of in Argentina, and we were high enough so we could look out over our terrace and see the curve of the earth as the city stretched out in front of us. We had parquet floors, and when the wind blew, the furniture traveled across the floors. You'd go to bed with a chair on one side of the bedroom, and you'd wake up in the morning and it would be against the wall on the other side of the room.

Then the Korean War broke out, and I sensed that everybody was going to get frozen in their jobs. I was in the agriculture office. We did a cycle of reports on dairy, meat packing, grain consumption, wool production, shipments of offal to the United States. One right after another – you could look ahead and know exactly what you were going to be typing three months down the road, so I came back to the United States, back to Bellingham in 1950. I couldn't find any jobs that I seemed to be suited for in Bellingham so on New Years Day, my father and I got on the train and came down to San Francisco to get me a place to live and a job. The first morning I looked in the newspaper and saw that the president of the White House department store needed a secretary, so I walked a couple of blocks down the street, and even though it was a Saturday, I managed to have some interviews and was hired as executive secretary of the department store, which was just a simply marvelous, marvelous job. The man was a Frenchman and had been aide to De Gaulle in the First World War, and was the nephew of the founder of the store, which was almost a hundred years old at the time.

I did runway fashion shows for employees before the store opened for each season. First the gowns for the opera ball opening and the symphony opening. Then the winter clothes would come out and then you'd prance around and show off those things, and then spring and summer. We could shop any time we wanted to at the store -- that was fun. Of course, we had big discounts. Mr. Weill was also very prominent socially and in civic matters. He was president of the de Young Museum Society and was treasurer of the Stern Grove concert group. He was chairman of the signing of the Japanese Peace Treaty during the time that I was there. I got involved in interfacing with caterers and making arrangements for events and parties and that's what led to my future career that spanned about thirty years.

After about three years of that (unless I wanted to go into being an assistant buyer or actually selling, there wasn't any way that I could progress), I reluctantly went to work for one of the Bechtels because of a contact that was made when Bechtel was building the refinery out at Cherry Point. That was not a good experience. Bechtel owned the workman's compensation company that naturally serviced the Bechtel Engineering. It involved doing luncheons for the board and luncheons for business meetings in Los Angeles a couple of times, so I was getting more and more experience in events.

In 1957, just before my father passed on, I moved down to Menlo Park and got a job at Stanford Research Institute in preparation for their first international industrial development conference which was in San Francisco. It entailed about 500 people and their spouses. It was a big event and the reason I was hired was because I had done these events and meals. One of the founders of SRI (the threads weave around here) was a man named Dudley Swim, who originally was from Lynden and told me that my Grandmother boarded at their house while she was teaching at the school there. At the time when I knew him, he owned Western Airlines and then National Airlines. He was a lovely man as was his wife. I did some parties for him, too. Everything seems to just kind of intertwine here, but all paths seem to lead to California, you notice.

At SRI we didn't have any conference facilities at first. I was doing banquets outdoors under oak trees where measuring worms came down over the table just before the guests arrived, or it rained, or somebody forgot to turn the automatic sprinkler off. Then in 1967, we started planning an international building which would be a conference center with an auditorium, a daily dining room, catering, a bottle club for evening cocktails, and many smaller meeting rooms. It opened Labor Day weekend of 1969 and continued. I think by the time I quit working, our food and beverage volume was up over a million dollars a year, and sometimes we had as many as six or eight private catered luncheons going on at the same time because we had a covered patio area around the courtyard and almost all year round we could have lunch out there if we needed the space. The daily dining room kept us hopping. We were very busy.

After that I didn't do any more traveling. I had been traveling a lot putting seminars on around the country and I'd be in a different city for a different seminar every day. I sure learned how to pack and how not to take too much stuff. I wore the same clothes and if I broke a heel or something I just bought a new pair of shoes. I figured nobody is going to see me two days in a row so I just wore the same clothes. I remember one trip in the spring, I had kind of a leaf green, fuzzy kind of tweed jacket, which was perfect because you could use Energene if you got a spot or something because it was fuzzy, it wasn't flat, and you could clean it up. I washed my nylons every night, just took enough underwear, no change of clothes. I had to take a hat because we wore a hat and gloves then. Oh and I had sort of a dressy top that I could wear with a skirt for dinner, which I usually ate by myself in the hotel dining rooms. I did two more of those international meetings also in San Francisco.

If you look at the Fairmont Hotel on television or in pictures, you see that over the front entrance there's a bank of international flags -- I think there are thirty or so. I originally put those up in 1961 for the international meeting. The hotel liked them so much, they bought the flags from my supplier and they've been there ever since. Meanwhile, the international building did not fare so well. It only lasted about twenty five years and then it was dismantled. It was filled with artifacts and handmade rugs and artwork and carvings and all kinds of things donated by our associates around the world. SRI's business prospects declined and they finally stripped the building and have rented it out to law offices. They closed the dining

room and they use that for meeting rooms, they kind of put up partitions. They kept the auditorium but they don't have use of the courtyard for any of their own meetings. Fortunately I was already gone by then.

One of the things that goes back to Western is that one of the big events that my Mother planned every year was the Publications Ball, there were no boys for the ball during World War II, so she worked with Buck Bailey, who was the athletic director or coach at Pullman to send over bus loads of their NROTC and ROTC boys. That must have been some drive at 35 miles an hour from Pullman to go to a dance in Sam Carver gym. Buck Bailey was the uncle of the man with whom we designed and built the international building (there's always another little thread running through). I don't think Buck ever came to Western, but I sure remember those buses pulling up, because I was of course still in high school. Buck Bailey came through with those poor bedraggled boys. I think that that ball was in the winter time and they'd have to go over one of the passes, Snoqualmie or Stevens Pass. Anyhow, we had a laugh about that; the name of his nephew was Hoot Gibson. He actually has many functions and memorials honoring him at Pullman and in fact was once considered or asked to be president at Pullman.

I forgot one little piece of family lore having to do with my grandmother and her experiences in the wild west of Lynden. It must have been about 1890; the terminus for the transcontinental railroad was going to be situated in Blaine. Hearing this stunning piece of news and not wanting to miss anything, my grandmother hired an Indian pony and rode all night with a group of friends to buy property in Blaine. One of our Sunday outings as I was growing up was to go look at Grandma's lot in Blaine. Of course, the terminus didn't come and the lot was still empty the last time I saw it. My mother finally let it go for taxes in the mid-Fifties.

She also bought a lot close to Geneva at Lake Whatcom. My father and three men from England who were waiting in Bellingham for their minesweeper to be finished, used to go out and chop firewood every Sunday for exercise out at the lake and come to our house for high tea. Finally after about six months and lots of firewood the boat was finished, but never even made it back to England. Those were fun Sundays. Mother also worked at the USO at the YMCA during at least two years of the war and she served coffee and donuts on Sunday mornings to G.I.s. My father was part of a not guerilla warfare but a kind of homeland force that was going to protect us. We had gun emplacements in our backyard on North Forest after the Japanese bombed Dutch Harbor. We had trucks with soldiers and submarine guns in place ... right next to St. Joseph's Hospital, where the original St. Joseph's was.

Anyway, in the process of getting documented, he discovered that he only had one fingerprint; that was all he had, he didn't have any others. When I went to be fingerprinted (so I could be bonded when I worked at the post office in the summer of 1945 after I graduated from high school), turned out I don't have any fingerprints at all, not one! That caused great consternation when I was in the Foreign Service. Occasionally strangers would call me by some other name. They'd mistake me for somebody else and I'd think, "*Oh, please! I don't have any fingerprints; I can't prove who I am!*" I had my dental chart on file at SRI for a long time. Of course, now that's even gone and some of the teeth are gone too! Every time I see these newfangled ID things that will use your fingerprints, I think, "*Well, I'm out of luck on this one!*" I suppose I'm just as conspicuous because I don't have any.

I should have embellished my stories about childhood memories and holidays and parties and the fun that we had with the Hickses. The interesting part was that they were so obviously not from any small town in the state of Washington. Mrs. Hicks was in the style of the Thirties, kind of a flapper beauty with lots of eye makeup and lots of apple red rosy cheeks and clothes fresh off the rack in California when they came to Bellingham. I think I recall that the last fashion show that she modeled in (and she used to do it regularly for various events and charities), she was well into her eighties. The last time that she modeled she was still the same size that she had been when she first burst on the scene. They were (besides Dr. Hicks' running in the murky hours of the morning) health nuts. My father was bald, and Bernice said that if he would eat wheat germ, his hair would grow back. They gave him a big bag of wheat germ for Christmas one year. I swear it was Valentine's Day before he stopped wearing wheat germ on his head as he sat around the house with it trickling down over his ears. If Bernice was there, she pretended she didn't notice.

Another time when we all went to the – it must not have been the Christmas party because it was daylight – Clarimonde stumbled on the top steps of Edens Hall and rolled all the way to the bottom, much to our horror. She got up and dusted herself off and was fine!

We also had running jokes. One thing that they did was in the middle of the Depression they built this Cape Cod house on South Forest Street, just down the block from Sycamore. Except for Clarimonde's bedroom upstairs, they never finished the second story, so there were just all the studs and planks where the floor would be. But up at the top of the steps was one room that was finished and that was Clarimonde's. The last time that I saw them when I was in Bellingham, Vi and I took them to the yacht club for lunch and went back to the house. They had finally painted the interior of the house; the last time that I had been there when I was in high school, they had never painted the plaster or the woodwork. I shouldn't tell tales out of school, but when my mother worked briefly in the registrar's office at Stanford, she said that Arthur Hicks had the highest IQ of any that she could find in the records. He was one sharp cookie! And Bernice – I was scared of her when she first arrived because I'd never seen anybody exactly like that -- but she was a good scout. Arthur was from Ashland, Oregon, but I don't know where she was from, I don't remember.

I remember going out to work in the Sixties sometime, I went down to the cross street at Gilbert here, and here I see Arthur Hicks with Bernice in the car, driving around and around, peering at house numbers. It turned out that his niece lived in the house at the end of the block. I didn't even know Arthur drove because he didn't when I lived in Bellingham. They didn't have a car and he didn't drive. Poor mother was still asleep and they of course insisted that they were going to see her. I had to come back to the house and rouse her and convince her that it was really necessary for her to get up and comb her hair and put on a pot of tea or something for them.

Sometimes I feel forlorn that none of my family, not even the immigrant Scots, remained in Bellingham. As I've said, I feel that my mother always yearned for California; the cruise to Los Angeles in 1933, the drive down to the world's fair in 1939, my Stanford experience, followed by several drives down when I lived in San Francisco, then Mother's stint at Sunset Magazine in Menlo Park, and finally their move in 1954 and meanwhile I was settled here and my brother was a diplomat shuttling about the world although he had plainly selected Southern California as his home base by the end of the Thirties. We both feel very close to the town and its history as well as cherishing our own personal deep roots in the area going back more than 75 years.