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This interview was conducted with Jack Carver at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington, on January 30, 2006. The interviewer is Carole Morris.

CM: This is January 30th, 2006 and I'm Carole Morris interviewing Jack Carver on the Campus School Memories Project which is a Western Washington University project. So, Jack, can you tell me your full name?

JC: My full name? Originally it was John Coston Carver, after my dad, Coston, but I always went by Jack, except in the service I [went by] John. Anyway, I went by Jack in grade school when I was going to Normal Training School. It was sort of a down graded city school, I suppose, because it was special. It was a student teacher project. We enjoyed the whole thing as far as I can remember. This has been quite a while ago when I went up there, 1923 to 1932. I went Kindergarten through the eighth grade.

CM: How did you happen to attend the school, Jack?

JC: We lived about two blocks from the Normal School down at 710 Garden and it was an easy walk up to school and my uncle, Sam Carver, he was a teacher up there at the Normal. I don't know if he had an influence or not, but anyway, we participated by going to the Normal Training School. My sister, Jean, who was a year behind me, also went to the Training School. We would walk up the two or three blocks to school everyday. It was an easy walk. We came home for lunch everyday. Lots of times after school, I would stop at a little grocery store at about 611 High Street called Cook's Grocery and always get a little bit of candy there. I had a sweet tooth, I suppose, that's developed over the years. It was always a fun time going to the Normal Training School. The school itself, I thought was Bellingham State Normal School, wasn't an official name, I don't believe, Bellingham State Normal, but we called it that. Blue and white colors, I always enjoyed it around that school, big time.

CM: What did your Uncle Sam teach, Jack?

JC: Oh, he wasn't a grade school teacher, he was in the college, but he did teach us kids in the gym. We called it the men's gym because it was used by the men and we'd go down there probably every day for gym class and run around. I don't remember quite what he had us doing, but he did teach us.

CM: Were the boys separate from the girls in gym class?

JC: No, I think we all went down together.

CM: So was it called Training School the whole time you were there?

JC: Yes. Normal Training School.

CM: Do you know if your family paid any fees for you to attend?

JC: I don't think they paid anything, no. I don't recall they did.

CM: Did anyone else from your family go besides your sister Jean?

JC: There's only two of us that were there, no other kids in the family.

CM: Did you have other brothers and sisters?

JC: No.

CM: Do you remember any favorite classmates?

JC: Oh, as I got older I certainly did. I was thinking about that the other day. Vivian Clarke, she was an early flame, perhaps, at least I remember walking home with her at lunch time fairly often, I think. She lived a little ways from where we did. I was in a younger class at that time, but somehow...

CM: Is Clarke her married name?

JC: No, that was her name then. There was Jack Whitmore, whose dad was an attorney in town. I still correspond with him, he lives down in Arizona. Jack Most, Billy Jim Dee, he even ran for governor of Idaho about ten, fifteen years ago, but he didn't win.

CM: Are these people still around?

JC: No, they've gone. Howard Murray, Lorraine Ellis, now, she's still alive, and Jean Wellington, she's in Bellingham, doing fine. Margaret Jane Bruff, she was a school librarian in Arlington. I think she's still down there. Bill Gardiner, he's deceased, but he was a county assistant prosecutor for a while. Let's see, I think I'll mention that Lorraine Ellis deal again, if I may. I think this was in the eighth grade, I was a young guy. We were in a play together, an eighth grade play I guess. I had to kiss her. Somehow I kept that memory for all these years. I don't suppose she ever did, but anyway, I did, because it was a something an eighth grader was remembering. I can't remember the name of the play now; maybe it was too exciting for me.

CM: So did you put on a lot of plays?

JC: We would put on a few plays. It was part of the curriculum, I suppose, in the eighth grade, getting us to be a little more mature in front of people and trying to memorize things. Bertha Crawford was our eighth grade teacher and she was a good white haired lady who kept us on the straight and narrow pretty well. Probably she was one of those influential teachers, along with Priscilla Kinsman. Now, she taught kindergarten, I remember and those years when I was starting. Of course, Miss Merriman in the fourth grade, I can't remember some of those other main teachers, but they were the pioneers in Training School teachers. There were about four or five of them that stayed there forever it seemed like.

CM: Who was your favorite, did you have a favorite?

JC: I suppose, since I was older, you could say it was Bertha Crawford.

CM: Why?

JC: Maybe because I remember her mostly.

CM: You said she kept you on the straight and narrow, was that something that she thought you needed?

JC: Well, she tried to keep most of us on the straight and narrow and I imagine she did. Changing that back a few years, Mildred Moffett, she was I think our second grade teacher. She was also one that I have a good memory about.

CM: What about student teachers, do you remember any of them?

JC: I don't remember the student teachers.

CM: At all?

JC: No.

CM: You don't remember them observing you?

JC: Well, I do remember them coming in as a class and observing, yes. They'd always sit in the back of the room in chairs and they kept quiet and probably took some notes on the good and the bad.

CM: Did you just get used to them being there?

JC: Yes. They came in regularly, really, I suppose, as part of their schooling.

CM: It didn't bother you?

JC: It didn't bother me. I was a less talkative person than some, so it didn't bother me as much as it might have.

CM: What were your favorite subjects or classroom activities?

JC: Well, for a while there, I enjoyed art with Miss Plympton. I think we went down to the college classroom where she had us participate every week or every couple days or so. I remember making a boat out of soap. I had it for a while, but I think it got lost in the shuffle.

Let's see, I remember one student teacher, Mr. Tagenfeldt. He had us working on a little house on the outside of Old Main, which was our home up there. On the south side of Old Main was where all the grade school kids had their classes. I think there were two floors of us. This little house was out on the side hill there. I think we used nails and hammers to work out there for a while, but this is in the latter grades, maybe the seventh and eighth, when we could handle a hammer a little better, and a saw. I don't know what happened to the house. I suppose it's gone now. It was enjoyable at that time to get outside and do a little something.

CM: Did the students build the whole house?

JC: I don't think the students built the whole house. I think we did a little work inside.

CM: So maybe he was going to be a shop teacher or something?

JC: He might have, yes, that could very well be.

CM: What other classes did you enjoy or activities?

JC: I always liked P.E., where you get to run around a little bit.

CM: That was with your uncle?

JC: Yes.

CM: Sam.

CM: Did you study math or English or anything like that?

JC: Oh, yes. We had regular schooling of course, learning math and writing and history. I think I liked history a little bit, too. Which is what you have right here, right now, a little bit of history.

CM: Do you remember anything about those particular topics? Did you feel like you got a good background in math...?

JC: I think I remember, every week we got a Weekly Messenger. I believe it was called. It had the news of the world on it. We read that, probably discussed it. I think that started about the fifth grade. It was an interesting habit to get into, reading something about world events.

CM: Do you think that might have influenced your news career?

JC: I don't know, it could have. Of course, my dad was in the Herald, too, so that was an influence also.

CM: What other kinds of things did you use in class, like textbooks? Do you remember any specific books?

JC: No, I do not.

CM: Did you use Dick and Jane?

JC: No, I don't remember the details of those books, sorry.

CM: What kind of grading system did they use, or did have grades? Do you remember anything about that?

JC: I know we had the letter grades later on. I don't know if we had it early or how early it was.

CM: Did you have regular morning rituals when your teacher came in? Did you say the Pledge of Allegiance or anything like that? Do you remember any of that stuff?

JC: No, I'm not sure on that right now. This has been 75 years ago and I just don't quite remember those little early morning get-togethers.

CM: Did you ever attend summer school?

JC: No, I don't remember summer school.

CM: What out of classroom activities did you engage in, say at recess? You said you went home at lunch. Do you remember games you played or anything you enjoyed doing?

JC: I remember there was a huge sandbox outside of Old Main, down near the tennis courts at that time, which was also south of Old Main. Then there was Waldo Field where the college played their football and baseball.

CM: You said you were on the football team?

JC: We had a football team. I remember in the eighth grade we had a good football team, played with some of the city schools. We played at Waldo Field a number of times. I have a picture here of our team in the eighth grade, about 12 kids I think, somewhere in there.

CM: Who coached that, Jack?

JC: Who coached it? We had a coach named Scottie Skotheim [Sivert Skotheim]. S-[K]-O-T-H-E-I-M. I don't know if he was a student teacher or what, but he was our football coach.

CM: So did you have practice during the school day or was it after school?

JC: This was an after school project.

CM: So you had to decide to be on the team and practice.

JC: We practiced after school, yes. I had a paper route, too. That was about the eighth grade. But I had to juggle my time.

CM: Were there other teams?

JC: We had Roeder and Lowell.

CM: No, at the Training School, did they have other teams besides football?

JC: Oh, I think we had basketball and baseball. I remember playing baseball, first base. I had a mitt for a long time, but then I threw it out. I know; I should have saved a lot of this stuff, because we had annuals, also. I had quite a few of them, but in moving, they went down the drain, recycled, and I regret it all now of course. I should have saved a few of them.

CM: What did the girls do, do you remember if they were [on] any sports teams?

JC: I don't think girls had much organized sports at that time.

CM: Were there any track teams or anything like that?

JC: I don't remember participating in grade school track.

CM: What about recess? Did people go out on recess and play in a certain area?

JC: Yes, we had a recess in the gym in the winter, of course. Also, in the spring we would go outside I remember. I don't know if we had certain games or who led us. I suppose it's [those] student teachers, who kept us going.

CM: What gym, Jack?

JC: There was also another big gym for the college, besides the men's gym, which was in the middle of Old Main. The big gym, where dances and so on [were held] for the college kids, that was in the south end of the gym, where the performing arts stage is right now.

CM: In Old Main?

JC: In Old Main.

CM: The little theatre down there.

JC: That was a larger gym, yes.

CM: Did you go around the college itself, besides Old Main? Did you go to the library or were there other buildings that you went when you were in the Training School?

JC: I think, unless we had a class, we didn't go down into the college area. I think we were on our best behavior and stayed away from that. Miss Mary Rich, who was our grade school principal, had an office there in our area and I don't think she liked any of us going down into the college part. One other thing, Miss Mead, she was the nurse. I think her dad or somebody was the governor. She was dispensing thyroid pills every week I believe it was, she'd come along in a cart and we'd all have to get a thyroid pill. For some reason they didn't want us to get thyroid problems.

CM: Interesting. How much of Old Main was there? Was it like it is now?

JC: Old Main was the same up south north; there was a different set up for rooms of course. We played in the hallway down in the basement a lot, too. There was a hallway where the air vents and all that was located. Anyway, we had a couple little rooms down there that we could use.

CM: Down below where the gyms were?

JC: Where the big gym [was], there [was] a hallway at the foot of the stairs there.

CM: The same level as the big gym?

JC: Yes.

CM: So your classrooms were above there?

JC: Yes, classrooms above.

CM: So did you take up just part of those two floors above?

JC: Yes, starting with the Kindergarten and ending with eighth, I think we were one room for each grade. There were just about enough students each grade to make one room.

CM: Did the teachers have offices by your classroom?

JC: They had a desk that I recall, in the room.

CM: They didn't have separate offices?

JC: Maybe Bertha did, a little cubby hole office off of our eighth grade room, maybe a few of the others might have had that also, I'm not sure.

CM: You went from there to ninth grade. Did you want to say anything else about any of that, Jack?

JC: Ninth grade to Fairhaven High School, for four years, after that I came back to Western for a couple years.

CM: When did you graduate from Fairhaven High School?

JC: 1936. We were the last class at Fairhaven, as it burned down New Year's Eve, '35, '36.

CM: So you went to Western in 1936-37.

JC: 1936 to 1938.

CM: So was that a good transition from Campus School to Fairhaven?

JC: I might have been scared stiff, I don't know, going to a tough old south side school. But, from our protected Campus School or Training School, then going into the city public schools, it was a little different set up. I think it worked out OK.

CM: Is that because you were going with your friends that you already knew?

JC: Well, of course, Training School kids could come from all over town, and they did. All of them didn't go to Fairhaven, probably less than half went to Fairhaven from the Training School. I think most of them lived on the other side of town.

CM: Did they have 25 students, or were there fewer than that, Jack, at Training School?

JC: At Training? I would say no more than 25.

CM: Would there be less than that?

JC: Not many less, no. We had a good round group there.

CM: So maybe twelve kids went on to Fairhaven, you think.

JC: I could pick them out if I looked through the list.

CM: We'll try to get you a list.

JC: OK.

CM: Do you remember any real differences, besides the fact it was bigger. You said they were tougher.

JC: Well they were all the south siders, they were fisherman family kids. As I look back, I can see that they were a more aggressive group than what we were coming out of Training School.

CM: Had to take care of themselves, pretty much?

JC: Maybe; I wouldn't say that we were sheltered, particularly, but it just seemed like a different atmosphere.

CM: Had you played that team when you were in football? Did they have any teams in their school that you played? Was there a middle school there that was with the high school, or was that somewhere else?

JC: There was no middle school. We went right from eighth grade to ninth in the high school.

CM: Was there a Fairhaven middle school at the time?

JC: No. That might have started, I'm not sure, after Fairhaven burned. I've forgotten when that started.

CM: So you really didn't know any of these kids from before, playing sports or anything. Do you remember anything about the difference in curriculum from the Training School going to public school?

JC: We had a set up of classes, of course, in high school. It was quite different from spending your whole day in one grade room, almost, except for maybe art or P.E. But then you go to high school and you change rooms somewhat often.

CM: Do you think you were well prepared from Training School? Did you have a good background in the subjects you were studying in high school?

JC: I suppose they taught us how to study a little bit. We weren't down in the dungeons studying, I mean, we were capable of studying, especially if your folks got after you.

CM: Did you learn to type in Training School, Jack?

JC: No, I took typing when I went to Western, with Miss Lovegren.

CM: So they didn't teach you in Training School how to type?

JC: No. I took a learning class in college.

CM: Did you learn how to do long hand writing, script writing, in Training School or printing?

JC: That's a good question. We had a teacher, Miss Gragg; Miss Gragg, yes. She was a penmanship teacher and we did have a special class in penmanship. I had forgotten that until you asked. Georgia Gragg was her name and her relatives are still around her. Let's see, that'd be Bob Miller, the realtor. Georgia Gragg was an aunt, I believe, of his. Anyway, she did a continuous job of trying to teach us penmanship.

CM: So it helped?

JC: It must have helped a little.

CM: So after you went to Western a couple years, where did you go after that?

JC: I went down to UW for a couple more years.

CM: You graduated there?

JC: I did not get a degree. I had probably about twenty credits less than a degree. I went down there about two years.

CM: Then you came back and started working at the Herald?

JC: No, I came back in the summer and worked at Western, putting out the summer school paper. I was the sports editor for the summer school paper; I think it was only one summer.

CM: What year was that Jack?

JC: That would have been 1940, probably. Those years, right in there, I'm a little hazy on what I was doing.

CM: Were you taking photos at Western at that time?

JC: No.

CM: It was later that you took those.

JC: I didn't take photos until I started work at the Herald.

CM: So what were you studying at Western and the U?

JC: I think I was not studying teaching. In '36-'37, I was just probably taking classes.

CM: General requirements?

JC: General classes. I remember from Dr. Bond, calculus, I think I liked that class. He was a good teacher. Journalism from Mrs. Ruth Burnet. I always enjoyed doing things at Western. I got a little bit in class politics.

CM: Like what?

JC: Vice president of the sophomore class, but that was no big deal.

CM: Do you think that going to Training School helped give you courage to run for office?

JC: It gave me a love for Western, I know that. I've always liked anything that had to do with Western or Normal at that time, and now. I'm just starting a scholarship at Western now. But anyway, it's all plus.

CM: You're starting a scholarship there?

JC: Yes.

CM: In your name?

JC: For Sam.

CM: Oh, that's good.

JC: Finally getting a scholarship under Sam's name.

CM: What's it for Jack?

JC: It's for athletics, especially football, basketball or golf, which Sam taught. So that's just something that needed to be done. I have a lot of support so far.

CM: That's great, Jack, it really is. So, after 1940 when you worked on the summer school paper, what did you do?

JC: I took some classes at the old Sehome grade school on High Street, classes in making things for Boeing and I went down to the Boeing company in 1941 and worked there on planes that were going to England as I recall. This was just prior to the war, of course. Then when the war started, I was living with Roger Mullen out at the University District. Roger was later a principal here in Bellingham for several grade schools, but he and I lived together down there on the UW campus while I worked at Boeing and he was going to the university.

CM: Was he from Bellingham?

JC: Yes.

CM: So then you went into the service after that?

JC: I went into the service in January of 1942, in the Army Air Corp. When I got out in October of 1945, I started work at the Herald. That's when Ben Sefrit told me to take the camera and learn something about it. We did and went from there.

CM: So you took a lot of photos up at Western, I know that. Was that your first assignment, sports photos or something?

JC: Not especially, no.

CM: You just liked it.

JC: I just kept Western in mind, of course, I always liked it.

CM: I know in your collection of work that you have from the Herald you have several Campus School photos.

JC: Yes.

CM: So you would just drop in and take photos?

JC: Well, if I heard of something going on, or the teacher or even the principal might have called and said, "*We have this going on, if you'd like to come up.*" I never said no to something on campus. There's always a picture possibility up there.

CM: Did you think the Campus School had changed since the Training School?

JC: Well, they had that new building of course. It was all modern. They had a director, several of them, I guess. It probably was quite a bit different. More upscale than when we were back in the early '30s, '20s. A lot has advanced since then.

CM: Did you see similarities from when you were there?

JC: I didn't sit in the class very much; I went there with a purpose in mind. So I did not view the general classes as they were going forward.

CM: I know you know some of the students who were student teaching in those pictures and in the classroom. Wasn't one of them George Boynton's daughter?

JC: George Boynton was a Herald reporter and editor, but his daughter, Stacy, was a student up there.

CM: A student at Western or the Campus School?

JC: Campus School, this was in the Sixties. I don't know what year, I've forgotten now.

CM: She's in one of your photos.

JC: She was in a couple of photos. As always, when I knew somebody I'd try to get them to do something.

CM: So you can identify a lot of those people in those photos.

JC: Some of them, some of them.

CM: OK, you mentioned several of your classmates you're still in touch with. Did you make a list of those, Jack?

JC: I can't tell you four. I have a picture here of the eighth grade Normal Training School math class, taught by Jack Schaefer. He just passed away about a year ago, but there are four people in here that I know of that are still around and living. Ethel Kent, she lives in Bellingham. Gladys Axling lives in

Portland. Jack Whitmore lives in Arizona, then there's me. I think the rest of them are not around anymore.

CM: What about the football picture, is there anyone in there that you know of?

JC: Well, that's about the same group, most all of them are gone except for me. I don't know of any others that are still around, really. I've outlasted most all of them, I believe.

CM: Would you be willing to help us call the people that you know so we can get them involved in the reunion and the exhibit?

JC: Oh, yes. I know Jean Wellington-McCloud, she's interested in this. She was wondering how much she could remember also, same as my sister who lives in Enumclaw. She was interested in trying to remember things also.

CM: OK, well, we'll get them some questionnaires and get their addresses and stuff from you. So is there anything else you wanted to share, Jack?

JC: I think you have covered most everything that I have a memory on and it's just a great thing that you're doing to resurrect these memories from Normal Training School and Campus School. I think Campus School itself started, when?

CM: [1899].

JC: Well, I mean, the present word "Campus School."

CM: Oh, I'm not sure when that started.

JC: It was when they built the Campus School, I think.

CM: That was in, [1943].

JC: Anyway, we're caught up on this part of it.

CM: OK, thank you Jack.