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This interview was conducted with Sally Eggen on November 2, 2009, in Special Collections, WWU Libraries (WL 279). The interviewer is Tamara Belts.

**TB:** Today is Monday, November 2, 2009; I'm Tamara Belts and I'm here with Sally Eggen who, after forty years, a little over forty years in fact because you started on 6/11/1969, is going to retire. I can't believe it! And so we're doing an oral history with her before she goes. My first question is: How did you even start working at Western, or at the library? And is that your first job? I guess there are multi questions in there.

**SE:** Actually, it is my first job. Well, permanent job. I went to Western and I was out of money so I thought, "Oh I need to work for a little bit." So I thought, "Oh I'll work on campus, what the heck." So I did and I applied for a job and Tom Frazier interviewed me. I started work the day after my last final. And that was that.

**TB:** So you went to Western for a year then?

**SE:** Three years.

**TB:** Three years? Oh you were almost done.

**SE:** I was. I was almost done.

**TB:** So you first actually came in the Fall of 1966?

**SE:** 1966.

**TB:** What were you originally planning on majoring in?

**SE:** Psychology.

**TB:** Oh really, okay. So tell me a little bit about—does that mean that you started working in the cataloging department?

**SE:** I did.

**TB:** So can you tell me a little bit about what kinds of things went on in the cataloging department when you first started? What was cataloging like?

**SE:** It was a very formal place, I think. That was back when the card catalog was the only tool that we could provide for people. So I think the emphasis was always, always accuracy. And that was the stress point, you had to be accurate on everything you did or it would get lost. I think that was kind of the main focus. It was very labor-intensive work, obviously.

**TB:** So how did you get copy in 1969? A book comes in from acquisitions and it comes to cataloging—

**SE:** We'd go to the bib room and take little pictures.

**TB:** [We've] got the camera here.

**SE:** We would take pictures of the copy. We would go to the union catalogs—the various, there were lots of them: NUC. And we would find the copy that matched the book. You took the book in with you and you searched for the copy through this way. It was always interesting. I mean we had bibliographic searchers who did that regularly. But as a cataloger you had to go do that too. And you would find the copy and you would take the photograph of it and then taking that, oh what was it called?

**TB:** Polaroid.

**SE:** Thank you! Polaroid! That was the word. I'm old I can't remember things. The Polaroid photo we would then mount on a card and send it off to a copy place that would then create the cards. Then we typed all the headings on the tops of them. We had to order the number of cards we needed and then we had to type all the headings on the top.

**TB:** So how many typists were there at that time?

**SE:** Two.

**TB:** What was your first position?

**SE:** My first position was accessioning and labeling. I worked at—the accession person worked in the mending which was in the basement at the time. So I worked part-time down there and the other part of the time I was doing the labeling.

**TB:** So could you accession before you'd gotten the card set back?

**SE:** That varied. It varied. Yes, because usually then we would just type the accession number on the shelf- list card. We would stamp the book in the accession file thing, but that was all. Then later as we got cards from Blackwell then we started accessioning the shelf-list too.

**TB:** And tell us a little bit about Tom Frazier because no one's ever going to tell us Tom's story unless someone like you tells us a little bit about what it was like to work with Tom.

**SE:** Oh gosh. Tom was a sweetheart. We just wanted to be protective of him. I mean he was just always so sweet. He was very knowledgeable about things. And he had his little quirks and all that, but you couldn't help but like him and admire him for the things that he did. I don't know any stories of him per se, other than he was colorblind which was always funny, because at that point subject headings were typed in red. And he couldn't tell a subject heading from an author entry, or whatever, because he was colorblind. But luckily they changed to all caps very soon after I started and so he was very happy about that, I remember. He could finally tell without having to look at it.

**TB:** And so you were here through Tom. Was Marian the next head of cataloging?

**SE:** No, no.

**TB:** Okay then who? Was there some kind of reorganization so that Tom went to Reference?

**SE:** Yes, Tom went to Reference and I think it was John Elder [Donald J. Elder, Jr.] that was next. I think that's right. I'm very bad at progressions. But he was in there somewhere. He wasn't there for a long time but

**TB:** Did you [work for] Steve?

**SE:** No, Steve was Serials.

**TB:** Serials, okay.

**SE:** Did it go from John to Marian? It may have, the first time around.

**TB:** Okay, now was there anybody that supplied cards before BNA [Blackwell North America]? Because BNA was—hadn't there been WLN or something else before BNA, or Abel?

**SE:** Well Abel; BNA sort of took over Abel. But prior to that we just photographed and sent them away for copies. That was an involved process and you had to order the right amount of cards and you had to type them when they came back. Then the typist would get a little bit nasty.

ELAP, I think was probably one of the first things where we started to get the cards—the English Language Approval Program, and they started sending cards with those. [Then] more and more we got cards that came with the books, so we did less and less Polaroids.

**TB:** So tell the story about how you started on the day that Miss Herrick retired?

**SE:** I did start that day. I met Miss Herrick very, very briefly. It was my first day, I was terrified. And this woman came through and everybody was very—it was just very, very formal and very polite. Of course, that's what it was back then. I mean, that's what you did at work. I remember her walking through and it was her last day and she had a corsage on I remember that. The thing I remember about Miss Herrick was that she didn't allow loud shoes and I was very nervous because I think I had loud shoes on that day. It was my first day I didn't know that we weren't supposed to wear loud shoes. So I tried not to get up and walk around while she was there.

**TB:** Okay. And what was the dress code then? Was there a dress code?

**SE:** Oh yes. You didn't even wear pants. I mean, women wore dresses, skirts. I think Brenda Brooks was the first one to ever wear jeans. She worked in Acquisitions and I think she was the rebel that first wore jeans.

**TB:** Wow. So tell me about administration at that time.

**SE:** It was Dr. Lawyer. I met him my first day so I know he was here.

**TB:** So tell us what it was like to work under Dr. Lawyer. And I guess I'm asking you from the point of view of someone who's worked here a long time and saw how it's opened up a lot more.

**SE:** Well it's opened up a lot more but back then it was kind of like a big family, too. Your first day of work you met the director of the library and he talked to you personally, and then you're given the tour and meeting everyone. It was at that time, it was kind of like a big family. Of course I think our proximity there too was—the administration office and tech services were all right together down in wherever we used to be.

**TB:** I think its down in the microfilm room.

**SE:** Except it was—actually it's the video room. We were all in what's now the video room.

**TB:** How many people worked in cataloging?

**SE:** Gosh, I don't remember.

**TB:** Like about five or so?

**SE:** Oh no, there was more than that. Let's see there would be one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine? 10? There were quite a few people in cataloging. Then acquisitions was also in that little room. I mean we were squeezed together, our desks touched, there was no room.

**TB:** And then the administrative office was just across the way.

**SE:** It was just through the doorway and it was right there. So we were all very close. And I think that made the difference. I think you know the fact that we were all there, I mean, we saw everybody all the time, everyday.

**TB:** So that was the Thiry version of the library, because you would have been working here when they were constructing the Bassetti addition. Weren't there colored floors and stuff like that?

**SE:** Yes. Oh yes. The colored floors were fun, and we tried to keep the colors in the card catalog the same way. We used the same colors as the window colors on the floors and trying to make it all match.

**TB:** So what did you color in the card catalog?

**SE:** The labels in the drawers. Just because. I mean, it was just what you did, I don't know. So we had pink and green and yellow and blue.

**TB:** Okay. So what kinds of changes did you start to see?

**SE:** I think the first big change was getting cards; starting to get cards already created. That was a major thing to start getting those, because it meant we didn't have to type all the headings and everything, where before the typists worked constantly doing this. So that was probably the first really big change that we saw, was getting cards, whether it was from Abel or whoever. Back then there weren't a whole lot of changes. The first years, I think it was just kind of a steady thing. It was just labor intensive work and that's what we did. But then we finally started to enter the 20<sup>th</sup> century and started getting a few things and life started changing more dramatically.

**TB:** Okay, continuing on: Anything you want to say about Marian as head of cataloging?

**SE:** You know, I think as we went through the heads of cataloging it was always interesting. I think each one brought their own flavor and style and you had to learn to adapt to that. I mean, Tom was one way and John Elder was another and then Marian and Karen, you know, each one is very, very different. I think for me, Marian was a tremendous help, personally, because she expected me to be much more independent and gave me authority to do things that I hadn't previously had. So I think with her it was much more challenging, and it made it more fun, obviously. It was exciting and scary and all that. She just sort of gave me a lot of rein. That was a big learning time.

**TB:** What about—now we regularly have staff meetings. Did Dr. Lawyer ever have staff meetings?

**SE:** Oh yes. He always used to tell us that we were using too many pencils.

**TB:** I've heard that. But I never seem to remember having meetings with him, so that's why I [think] there had to have been a time and then there quit being a time.

**SE:** Yes, we had meetings. It was probably once a quarter where he would have a whole library-wide meeting and we would talk about various things. But he always complained that we used too many pencils.

**TB:** And it was red pencils.

**SE:** Red, yes. I don't remember a lot about those meetings other than the pencils. But he did bring us all together.

**TB:** Where did you meet? Where was the meeting room? Did he just come into the cataloging room?

**SE:** I'm trying to think—I don't remember. Where did we meet? Staff room! Upstairs. Yes we met in the staff room. The sixth floor—the staff room was on the sixth floor. That was the only thing on the sixth floor. We had the staff room and then the roof, which was our patio.

**TB:** Okay, cool. And when did Mather come?

**SE:** Mather came about the same time as me. Either just before or just after, I don't remember. But I think he came the same year.

**TB:** Fred had been here?

**SE:** Fred was here already, yes.

**TB:** He was head of acquisitions then.

**SE:** Yes he was.

**TB:** Okay, so it sounds like the next big change was when you were getting cards. Then before we move on is there anything else during that era that we haven't talked about?

**SE:** I think it was just such a different atmosphere. I think having the card catalogs—I remember Ray McInnis would talk about us hens all gathering at the feeder, you know, because everybody would be out there filing or revising and he'd walk through and we'd be there. I think that the card catalog was kind of the gathering place for staff, too. I think that communication among staff was much stronger because we saw each other so very much. I think that made a big difference. Now we're a whole lot more isolated. Even though we communicate via email, we don't have the one-on-one that that time had. So it was a different time. That's why it was almost family-like in so many ways, because we were together so very much.

**TB:** Okay now going back to meetings, when they were planning the Bassetti addition, for example, were you all sort of involved in the planning of that?

**SE:** We were informed; we were not part of the planning for it. We were informed of it. The construction, obviously, was—I remember it being very noisy when they were jack hammering because we were right up against the wall and it was on the other side of the wall where they were jack hammering. But we didn't have any, well at least I don't remember now, the department heads may have but the staff themselves, we were not involved in the planning process for it. We were informed of the progress and what was going on. Well we lived in the middle of the construction for a very long time. We had pie parties for the construction workers. We did a lot of things like that. We were there and we could see the construction and all that, but no we weren't a part of the plans.

**TB:** Were you excited when it got done?

**SE:** Oh yes! Because we were all stuck in the video room there and we were moving into this massive, huge place. That was very exciting.

**TB:** And what about the dedication? I mean they had a big deal—Senator Magnusson came and the whole bit. Did you attend that? Do you remember that?

**SE:** I don't remember if I attended it or not, honestly. But I know there was a big deal about the whole thing. It was very exciting through the construction times, it was very exciting. It made life more difficult in many ways and all that but it was still just—the idea that we were getting these new areas and being able to expand, it was a fun time.

**TB:** So you got the new wing on the library and you expanded into the back, looking over High Street. And let's see—you would have had card sets by then. Do you know when we all started thinking about automating? Because I know we were fortunate at the time when we finally did that Blackwell had all these tapes that could tell us what all our—

**SE:** Right, but we initially started with RLIN and I think that was 1982 or 1983, when we had one RLIN terminal. And we joined that and we had—

**TB:** And you better spell that out or people are going to think it's a guy's name.

**SE:** RLIN, Research Library Information Network.

**TB:** There we go, okay.

**SE:** We joined them, and that was basically an online bibliographic service that we could search online for copy. Then we still ordered cards, but we could order cards directly at that point from them. We received shipments once a week from them, which changed dramatically, obviously, how we did things.

**TB:** Was that because they had such a much bigger database? Was that when you quit using the camera?

**SE:** Actually the camera was still being used, I mean, throughout the camera was used for those things we couldn't find other places. I think, well up until—I think Wayne was still using the camera, you know.

**TB:** So do you know what was kind of behind going to RLIN?

**SE:** Well just the whole notion, I mean we needed to join the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At that time, there was RLIN and there was the OCLC. They chose RLIN, which for searching possibilities, that was much better initially. Then that was a fairly unique thing, but we had one terminal only and we had to all share it and we had to schedule and do all this stuff. But that started changing things dramatically. We were still getting the approval, or Blackwell cards too. But it was for the things we didn't get Blackwell cards for that we searched on RLIN. And gradually that increased to two terminals.

**TB:** And you were able to add in some information too, right?

**SE:** Oh absolutely.

**TB:** Did you input original cataloging and get cards?

**SE:** Yes, yes.

**TB:** So it was kind of a shared bibliographic—

**SE:** Yes, it was exactly like OCLC in that respect that you could input. We did all our originals on RLIN. That was probably the biggest thing initially because we were still getting cards for things that had copy. So it was one of the original things we used RLIN for and gradually we started changing over.

**TB:** So when did we start the big move to go online? I know in 1995 we selected Innovative [Interfaces Inc.] but we must have been planning before that.

**SE:** Yes, years before. It was years of work. Well I think the next change after that was when AACR2 came into being. AACR2 came into being and that's when they changed all the formats of the names and formats of subject headings and things. And we had to hire staff; we hired all kinds of temporary staff. In fact, Donna Packer was one of the people hired at the temporary to work on the AACR2 changes. Because we had to go out and pull all those cards and change them all and file them back. Talk about labor intensive. But that was the beginning of the changes on how we formatted names and things. That was huge. We were involved with that for a very long time; I don't remember how long we had. But we had hired—

**TB:** Kris Rex.

**SE:** We hired a number of temp people to work on those changes because it was massive.

**TB:** Leslie Hall, I think. She did some of the music ones.



**SE:** Kris was one of the ones and Donna. Yes, I don't remember. But it was huge. That was a real big deal, a very big deal, initially. So that was our first really, really big change.

**TB:** Two parts here: Maybe to get it on the tape, what was the significance of AACR2 in the library world? They came out with this: it was Anglo-American Cataloging Rules—

**SE:** It was the revised edition; it hadn't been revised since 1965, or something. It was a revision of how the card was set up and a revision of how they formatted names and subject headings. It was a big, big change in the whole cataloging world. It was important enough that we had hired all these people to make these changes. We felt in order for the catalog to be usable we had to make the changes because we would be getting the new entries under a different form and they wouldn't be together. So the decision was made that we had to make these changes. So it was a big deal. The format of how the card was created changed too, that was a big deal; it was a learning curve certainly for people who had to do that. But it wasn't as big a deal—

**TB:** Were you here when we made the shift from Dewey to LC? Because when I came we were partially still Dewey. Have we ever moved all those yet?

**SE:** Actually, yes we have.

**TB:** Okay. There's no Dewey holdout somewhere?

**SE:** No, there's no more Dewey. The law was the last to go. I was part of, as a cataloger I did a lot of reclassification. I did the 500's and 700's and 900's, so we were in the midst of it—that was being done, I think it was already partly done when I started. It was huge too, but it was done as time allowed for the most part. It wasn't considered critical at that point. But they wanted to get it done.

**TB:** So is the next thing the move towards automation?

**SE:** I believe so.

**TB:** Okay, to put this into context for me because I worked a lot on a certain part of that project. What was all that transaction completed stuff we did? There was something, you'd pull in a record, you'd do something to it and then you'd get this message, "Transaction [Successful]."

**SE:** What were you doing?

**TB:** It was some big thing. We were pulling up—I'm asking you what it was because I kind of forgot. I know that the end message was "Transaction [Successful]."

**SE:** Was that the Blackwell conversion project?

**TB:** Probably, yes.

**SE:** That was one of the first ones we worked on, I think.

**TB:** That sounds right that it was Blackwell, but what were we doing—were we bringing that into RLIN or OCLC?

**SE:** We were getting our Blackwell holdings into an online database, I think is what it was. So we could get tapes of our holdings. I think that's what we were doing at that point because that was one of the first ones. And again, we hired temporary staff to work on that.

**TB:** And you also took people like me who worked half—

**SE:** Well yes, we took just about anybody we could. But yes that would have been one of the first ones in preparing for going online. There were so many projects. In fact, I was going through my files here just the other day I found some of these old lists of tasks and projects that had to be done, and it was this two-page list of the projects we were working on in cataloging. And I think, "Wow, I was a whole lot younger then."

**SE:** That preparing to go online, I have to admire the planning that was done with that. Because I think the preparation was pretty impressive that we were able to go totally online, with very few exceptions. Many libraries did not do that. They had the card catalog along with the online and they just started at a certain date and everything from that date on was online. Whereas we chose to try to get everything and consequently there were a whole lot of projects to get to that point. But I think it was pretty impressive, the planning that went through that, that we managed to do that in the way that we did it. That we could retire the card catalog all at once and that was that. I think throughout that, I remember going through it at the time you're so immersed in all of this that you don't really think about it. But when you look back on it, you think: "Wow." I mean, that took some pretty incredible planning to get all of those things taken care of. It was probably for cataloging, the most exciting times. It was hectic, it was crazy, and it was frustrating at times. But I think the goal there of going online finally was so motivating and I think everyone wanted that to happen. Well maybe not Walton, he was kind of a holdout maybe, but everybody wanted this to happen. And so everyone worked very, very hard. I think that we accomplished an incredible amount of work in those few years that we spent getting ready.

**TB:** And one of the great things about you Sally is that you always made it kind of fun. You always had a way of making it be kind of fun. Not just food, but one of the things we have here is the OCLC story.

**SE:** Oh yes.

**TB:** So why don't you tell us a little bit about the OCLC story, because I remember working on that too.

**SE:** Oh yes.

**TB:** What was it we were doing with those cards? And then we'd get to the end and we all got to write a line on the end of a box.

**SE:** We were sending our shelf lists to OCLC to be converted. We had to go through, and we mailed our shelf lists. That was a very scary thing—I have a copy of this too. I'm glad you have a copy of it. Actually, this was one of the last projects in preparing to go online. But we sent everything that wasn't an RLIN card to OCLC to have them attach our holdings so they could send us a tape of all of our holdings. It was very scary to think about sending our shelf list off in the mail, off it went. And as we started it, it was sort of this: "Oh my gosh are they going to come back?" And, "Will we know if they come back?" "Well, no." But it just sort of—it was so huge a project, I think we all felt that we had to do something to lighten it up. We filled these boxes. We had ordered all these special boxes for sending them in. It just started out funny and I think as we filled the first box—the first box of [shelf list cards]—people were like, "Gosh, we should mark this somehow." And we did. I mean, somebody wrote, "It was a dark and stormy night," and that started it.

So we started on each box, after they came back—we didn't write on them prior to, but as they came back we would write a line. We took those lines and put them as—they weren't necessarily in any order because everybody in cataloging worked on pulling the shelf lists. You'd fill the box and when it came back and we had them in order, the lines didn't necessarily make sense but we just started to write these lines. And all the sudden this story emerged. It got to the point where people wanted to do another box because they had a line they wanted to [write]. The lines didn't always make sense because there was no particular order to what you were doing, and you didn't know what someone else was writing. So it just got very funny but it was also amazing how it all came together. I think that that book was probably one of the most fun things in that part of it. I mean we put prizes in the cards, in pulling cards, we would go out and stick little things in the card catalog so if you could find this card you'd get this or that. But this thing, it just got funnier and funnier and as we went along, it just developed. So that was that.

**TB:** So what about barcode day? Remember when the library closed so we could barcode everything? Does that sort of show if things matched up? Because you could end up with a barcode that didn't go with the book but couldn't you have ended up with a book that needed barcode?

**SE:** Absolutely we did, yes. The barcode day had occurred after we received the tapes. We also then ordered what was called smart barcodes, where they had the call number and the portion of author title in it. So the idea was that let's get these smart barcodes on the books. Well, it's a big library so the administration decided to close the library for the day and everybody would go out and apply these smart barcodes. We had it set up where we had a station where you could bring back problems. You would take this bunch of barcodes and try to match the book to the barcode and put it on the book. And it worked in many cases. Yes, we had the barcodes where the book wasn't on the shelf, nothing you could do about it. We had to discover where the book was or if it was lost or if it was checked out or whatever. Then there were books up on the shelf that had no barcodes, too. Those we marked with green dots so later we could go up and find all the green dots and pull them off to find out what was going on with them. Yes, that was a big project. It was fairly long-term in clearing up the problems. But in essence it was kind of an inventory of the collection in many ways, because we did have to match these things up. And again, I think that was a fairly successful thing. We had to so many that did match that because we'd done the

conversion projects and so we had all of that. We were still cleaning up green dots a couple years later, but it wasn't this massive, massive project. We had to clean up a lot. We got *On the fly* records because if someone checked out a book that didn't have the barcode on it then circulation would create this *On the fly* record and we'd get those back. We had quite a few of those right at first, but that dropped down fairly quickly.

**TB:** We actually do still have some *On the fly* records.

**SE:** Oh absolutely we do.

**TB:** Like government documents.

**SE:** Well documents is probably most of it now. I don't think in the rest of the collection—well occasionally there is something that comes out. But yes, again it was a reflection on the planning that went on in that. It made it easy to do, even though it was massive, it was organized.

**TB:** So by then, weren't staff—weren't you pretty involved in the plans for that too?

**SE:** Yes. Well as we prepared to go online, Karen Rice was made the Implementation Librarian and she was head of cataloging at the time so she was no longer head of cataloging—and because she was going to be doing that, they asked me to become the manager of cataloging. So there were about two years there that I was manager of cataloging. In the process of doing all this online stuff, it was a little crazy. But again, it was a tremendous challenge. It was almost disappointing when that ended because you get used to that. It meant that I was on the Implementation Committee and that was a great experience too. I think I was the only staff member on it. Everyone else was—well Rick was on it too—but everyone else was a librarian. I learned a tremendous amount just being a part of that. Having to read the Innopac manuals was a killer! But doing all the profiles, setting everything up, it was a very interesting time. For me personally, that was probably one of the more fun times, if you can call it fun, exciting.

**TB:** Yes. Well I have a couple more questions regarding that—what do you think was your biggest accomplishment and then is there something that was the most difficult or disappointing? And then just in general, any comments about how the role of staff has changed in the library over the years. I mean that was pretty exciting you got to be on the Implementation Committee and the whole bit.

**SE:** I think preparing to go online and the years leading up to that and all the preparations that we did, and then the actual going online was probably the most exciting. The day they moved the card catalog out was probably one of the most poignant of times. It wasn't sad, but it was a little bit. We did a big hoopla for that. We have pictures of the 21-rod salute. I think that was, in terms of cataloging, an incredibly exciting time. Again, everyone was so committed to having this happen and excited about having it happen, and everyone worked so very hard. I just think during that time we were a remarkable group of people.

**TB:** And since then, Sal, you've practically ran the department again. You're a whiz at that catalog, I mean who is going to replace you in that catalog [expertise]? All [those global changes] —

**SE:** Nobody. I think that over time, it's changed. I think we have finally caught up now with technology a little more. Certainly the role of cataloging is changing dramatically. I think that's been obvious. It's a little bittersweet, a little sad to see it happening. But at the same time, we've always known that it had to happen. That cataloging is a—it's an expensive thing to do it well and libraries can't afford that kind of expense anymore. It makes me feel bad, because that's been my life here. But at the same time, the changes that are happening can be good.

Now I'm not certain about [what] the future holds for cataloging, I think that's a little unnerving right now. It makes me glad to be retiring. But there certainly could be a place, and I hope that the library does pull it around, because there are still some very good catalogers up there. And I think that even in the middle of all of this the cataloging, if it's not right, it still going to be a bad thing. I think more and more people are not concerned about the accuracy. But ultimately, if it's wrong in the online catalog, the chances of finding it are slim too. If it's not cataloged exactly correctly, okay maybe that's not so very important. But people who do browsing and things, if they're not classed in the place they should be classed in, they could get lost. I think that there is a danger of the quality disappearing. That's probably my biggest fear right now, the quality, it has disappeared a whole lot. At some point, I think the libraries are going to regret having done that.

**TB:** Anything I didn't ask you that you'd like to talk about?

**SE:** Holy cow.

**TB:** Don't be afraid to like, brag about yourself Sally.

**SE:** I don't think there's anything to brag about. I mean, I think that over the years I've had a strong work ethic, yes, and I've worked hard. I think I've contributed and now I think it's time to leave. That's kind of how it is. I think it's been a journey, certainly one that I don't regret taking.

I think that the people here have been, the characters throughout the whole time here have been the most memorable, of course. I think that starting in 1969, we were still in the age of hippies and all that—and the characters that came in and out of the library at that time. Jobs were easy to find, turnover was tremendous, and we had some real characters. It was fascinating to see all that too. Then the people that stayed. I think it's telling the people who stayed here, in cataloging especially; I mean the people have been there forever now. I mean there aren't any really newbies. They're committed to doing that kind of work, I think that's kind of telling. But we're all a little crazy too, so that makes it fun.

**TB:** So you brought up the Sixties and the early Seventies. Do you have any memories of the student protests up here? Or were you kind of—

**SE:** Oh yes, the time when they were on the—actually I considered taking part in the freeway [blockage], when they laid down on the freeway out there, but I didn't do it. That's when I was still a student. But, yes.

**TB:** There was a big one in May of 1970 after Kent State. You would have been working then.

**SE:** Yes, I was working at that point. I think being on campus was always exciting. That's one thing I have to say—I don't think you could find a better job, because there was always something going on. Oh my gosh, always something, I mean, students are crazy and that's what they're supposed to be.

**TB:** So do you think Western has been a good employer then?

**SE:** Yes, I do. Well if I didn't then I would have been a fool to stay here this long. But no, I think Western has been a great place to work. I feel like the benefits that we've had, the opportunities that we've had here, have all been good. And over the years—I mean there's always frustration with your job, yes, you know [you] can't stand it anymore. And there were tough times up here, lay-off times were never good, that was very stressful. But overall there's always been support—I've certainly always felt the support of working here. When I had health problems and things, I was scared stiff for a while. But it was like, "Oh no, everything's good." It made me feel very, very good, so you do feel a sense of community, a family coming together.

**TB:** Cool, so can you tell me about the electric erasers?

**SE:** Oh god, Winnie Tomich. The electric erasers were horrible things. But at the time that we had to type the headings on the cards, we were not allowed to use liquid paper when we typed. We had to use electric erasers, and there was one that was on a little platform thing and you had to go over there, so it was always obvious that you were making a mistake. You had to get up and go over to this electric eraser and very carefully erase the typing. Now, it was also very easy to make a hole in the card.

**TB:** So then you had to start over? Type the whole card over again?

**SE:** Yes. And that felt real dramatic when it was one of the Mongolian cards or Russian cards because you couldn't type those very well. Yes, the electric erasers were [interesting].

**TB:** Well anything else? One thing I think that probably even predates you, this one is—this is some of the toys in our collection. I know it's almost time for you to go, I'm sorry.

**SE:** That's alright.

**TB:** This is something you could use to make cards—now is that before you?

**SE:** Oh, that was. Yes, that is before me. But it was used to make cards, I remember.

**TB:** It's almost like a little mimeograph thing.

**SE:** Yes, it was a ditto machine kind of thing where it would make these little funny cards. I remember seeing the cards from it but I never actually used it. But I do remember seeing the cards from it, they were really nasty. It didn't work real well.

**TB:** Okay. And this is that camera you talked about?

**SE:** Oh yes.

**TB:** Which was still there when I was here; that was here for a long time.

**SE:** Right.

**TB:** Now can you tell me what this thing was though. A micro—what was this?

**SE:** I don't know. Was it a reader?

**TB:** I guess so.

**SE:** "Film off card."

**TB:** Yes, you kind of put them in there. I had the idea this was some kind of cataloging thing.

**SE:** I don't recall ever seeing this, so I don't know.

**TB:** Because there's like film or something that goes in.

**SE:** Yes, it says, "Film off card." I don't know what—

**TB:** I wonder if it was another way of taking pictures off of the—okay, well if you don't know then you don't know. I can't get it out of you!

**SE:** Micro card reader—that's what it says. We have those micro cards in Wilson 2 West, maybe this is the thing that allows you to read those. Maybe it is just a reader. I don't know, honestly. I don't know.

**TB:** This is a version of the iron—

**SE:** Oh yes. That's what we used when I started labeling.

**TB:** And [they] were already done with this when you started, right?

**SE:** Yes, yes. We had graduated to the accession machine.

**TB:** Okay

**SE:** Yes, we used those for withdrawals all the time.

**TB:** Yes, I saw what I think might be—like is that your writing?

**SE:** Yes, actually it is. Then we had that one temporary worker who wrote all the religious stuff in here.

**TB:** Really?

**SE:** “Praise the Lord,” and yeah. Here’s some reinstates of mine. I don’t know if it’s in this book. Yes, Sid was his name and he was doing a lot of this and he was writing little notes in here about: “Praise the Lord” and all this.

**TB:** Oh I’ll have to look for that.

**SE:** Yes, it’s in the books. He did it quite a bit, so you should be able to find it.

**TB:** Oh my gosh.

**SE:** Yes, there is a lot of my writing. That’s my writing, that’s my writing.

**TB:** And so that was when a book got lost or stolen then you’d go back through—

**SE:** We went through it and we kept—once we started using the accession machine then we had the files of those flimsy things that we kept in accession number order, the same thing.

**TB:** Oh yes.

**SE:** Yes, these books are pretty cool. I think the older ones are even more fun, the ones with the handwriting.

**TB:** Oh yes, Mabel Zoe’s own handwriting.

**SE:** Yes, those are great.

**TB:** Any other cool tools you had that I don’t have an example of? You have an electric eraser over in cataloging that I can borrow for the display.

**SE:** I think there still is one down in the cupboard; I think we have some stuff down there that we have kept.

**TB:** Okay, anything else?

**SE:** Gosh, who knows?

**TB:** Well you can think about it and add it in. Like this, that I haven’t—you obviously had typewriters.



**SE:** Well I think the SeLin labeler was always the, that was the horrible part of cataloging.

**TB:** Labeling.

**SE:** Yes, making the label machine work. Especially when it was—oh when I started it was a nonelectric typewriter. Oh, it was horrible. I mean the SeLin label was always considered one of the best. But the mechanism that you had to use to create it was horrible. Oh, that was such a nightmare. I think those were probably what most people hated, the label machine. Yes.

**TB:** Anything else?

**SE:** Nothing that's coming to my head at the moment.

**TB:** We can always add it in textually.

**SE:** Yes.

**TB:** Okay, great. Thank you very much Sally!

**SE:** You're welcome.