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This interview was conducted with Barbara Welsh McCollum on February 16th, 2006, at her home in Bellingham, Washington. Her husband Richard McCollum is also present and makes some comments. The interviewer is Tamara Belts.

TB: Today is February 16th, 2006 and I am here with Barbara Welsh McCollum. She was a Campus School student. We are going to go through the Campus School Questionnaire and add in some extra stories, too. Our first question is how did you happen to attend the Campus School?

BM: I think it was because we lived in the area, period. My brothers...

TB: Your brothers had already went there?

BM: Yes.

TB: That's actually our next question. Did anyone else in your family attend the school and what were their names?

BM: My twin brother Bill Welsh, my brothers Bob Welsh and Barney Welsh and [sister] Joan Welsh.

TB: What were the years and grades of your attendance?

BM: I don't remember.

TB: I think you must have come in the fall of 1938 [Kindergarten] and graduated in 1947 [ninth grade].

BM: Good. Yes, yes.

TB: We'll double check that but I think for other people in your class that seemed to be when they were there.

BM: I'm only forty seven, how did it work out [laughter]? Go on.

TB: That's true, that's true. Did your family pay any fees, do you know, to attend the Campus School?

BM: I have no idea.

TB: We don't think that they did. Where did you live when you attended the Campus School?

BM: On 17th Street.

TB: Okay. How did you get to and from school?

BM: Well, when we first started going to school, we had a chauffeur and his name was Gunther and he would drive us to school. We would pick up Dan and Chuck Olsen at the corner and go to school that way. Mother would [also sometimes] drive us to school, or [we took] the bus, or we walked.

TB: Okay. So you really did go to school in a limousine! I heard that.

BM: Yes.

TB: That's wonderful. And/or your mother took you.

BM: Mother would take us to school but she wouldn't be dressed. She would have her bathrobe on and [once] she ran out of gas so she learned to get dressed because she had to get help to get home!

TB: Oh no! Please share any favorite memories of this experience (walking to and from school). You also talked about walking across the hill.

BM: I remember on the bus now getting off then you had to walk up those stairs. They were steep stairs all the way up then across, then you had a road guard gal, then you had Old Main, then you went to Campus School. It was those stairs that were so difficult to go up.

TB: Were they then in front of the library? Or were they off of Garden?

BM: Off of Garden; really straight up. I remember Gene Geske played the saxophone or some instrument and she could barely get up the stairs! But the road guards, it was either adults and then later on you could be in eighth or ninth grade out there, the people crossing the street.

TB: Okay. What did you do for lunch?

BM: I think in the beginning it was soup, (I was trying to remember this) soup, something, and ice cream. We used to bring our lunch, but Don Turcotte, he was always the one who ate their lunch there. I remember that because he used to get a funny face. When we were older then we were over at the cafeteria at Edens Hall. That's where that picture was.

TB: Okay. I've definitely heard of Edens Hall by the time you were in junior high. I think there was a lunch cart when you were in the new school.

BM: Yes, they would bring it up; soup, milk and ice cream. That was what the teacher would say, "Soup, milk and ice cream." And Don Turcotte always ordered that, but we had sandwiches so we didn't have to fool with that.

TB: Nice. Do you remember any favorite classmates? Please name them for us and tell us some stories about them.

BM: Well, since there were four Barbara's, we went by our last names. Susan lived up on 17th Street. She was my favorite friend. Gene Geske lived on 17th Street and her sister Robin went to Campus School. I don't know if we're talking about where everybody lived.

TB: Right now, first, just remembering your favorite classmates.

BM: Oh, they all were, from time to time.

TB: But you had some stories about each one of them. You actually went by „Welsh“?

BM: I was "Welshie."

TB: Welshie, okay. What was Barbara Albers called?

BM: Albers; and Lindy and Dorsey.

TB: That's great.

BM: I don't know how to explain it. We had gangs. It was separate groups. I was fortunate enough to be able to be in both of them because Gene Geske and I and Bea Nelson, we used to walk the railroad tracks. In those days you could walk from 17th Street clear down. We would pack a lunch and walk the railroad tracks and eat lunch and whatever. The other girls wouldn't do that but Gene and [Bea and I] would do this all the time. We were camper-outers and we used to scare the Boy Scouts because there on 18th Street they would have all their things up there and Gene and I were troopers. We could hide and we watched them and scared them! We were outdoorsy. But I got to [be part of both groups] because [I also] went to dance school and all [that] sort of stuff so I was a part of both „crowds“ I guess you would call them, not gangs. Rosemary Rykken, then, was the head of the crowd. If Rosemary walked backwards, so did Albers. It was gang things.

TB: So was the dance school part of Campus School, or was that something you did after school?

BM: It was after school. In fact, I made my debut at the American Theater which became Penney's. I didn't know that they showed a movie first and then we danced. We got on stage, curtsied and walked off, you know. Everyone took dancing lessons; or piano lessons, too.

TB: Why don't you tell us a little bit about your brother?

BM: Bill?

TB: Yes. What was it like being twins in school, in that class?

BM: Well, I think that was pretty good. We didn't have that many problems. It was in high school that Bill used to rat on me at dinner time. [The school] alphabetized everybody, so they switched it so Bill and I didn't have to be in the same classes. So he couldn't tell if I was a slow reader or I did this or whatever. Bill and I did very well in school because Bill had his friends.

TB: Alright. So who were your favorite or most influential teachers?

BM: I think all of them. Miss Nicol; I'm trying to think. Lucille Barron, who died, taught.

TB: Oh, really? You had her for [Home Economics]?

BM: Yes. Susan Jones and I flunked sewing. We did not do sleeves well and aprons. I remember Susan and I weren't very good at that. Lucille was a very, very pleasant gal.

TB: Wow. So that must have been in the junior high?

BM: Yes. They taught us all about vitamins and what [they] meant. I thought we would be learning to cook. We did, it was the first time I ever cooked carrots. We didn't like...I can't think of her name. Cunningham? What Rosemary did when making custard, instead of using sugar, she put in salt! Miss Countryman, maybe it was Miss Countryman, [she] took it home. She lied when she came back and said everything tasted so lovely, but we knew what Rosemary and Albers did! That's what was so priceless about Campus School. You learned to write. You learned about food. Mrs. Button is the one that gets the „A,“ teaching us music. We had desks (this is in the new school) where you put your head down and she would tell you about it and then play *Peter and the Wolf*. She gave us all, people who weren't aware of music, (my mother had been an opera singer, but the other kids) they heard about that and then appreciated music. She was excellent. Her mother was Mrs. Deerwester-Darling.

TB: Oh! That's right! That has come up before. Oh, I know, because of Ned Button!

BM: Yes.

TB: Do you remember any of your student teachers?

BM: The only one I can remember because of Sarah Rankin, in the ninth grade, Mr. [Ludwick]. We called him „Luddy.“ These are guys that after World War II came home. That’s the only one I can think of. I can visualize but I don’t remember their names or anything except „Luddy,“ [Ludwick].

TB: What were your favorite subjects or classroom activities?

BM: Well it was drawing, art. I loved music. I don’t know, just about generally everything.

TB: How about woodworking?

BM: I did that in the sixth grade because I wanted to be with the boys again, so I got to make a menu thing.

TB: And the girls did do that a lot, didn’t they? And the boys did cooking too, didn’t they? I mean, I shouldn’t lead you, but I’ve kind of heard it was kind of unusual because boys and girls both did what was not always [traditional for them].

BM: Yes. Miss Gragg taught us writing, the round of the „o“ and all this sort of stuff. What I thought was so much fun, again, sitting in the third grade on the floor and – God rest his soul – Pete Onkels used to get up to the blackboard and make huge letters and be silly.

TB: Tell me about that. If you guys didn’t really have desks, how did you write? Or how did you do homework?

BM: I’m sure we must have had desks. I know in the first grade we did. Maybe it was just certain times that we sat on the floor.

TB: Okay.

BM: Yes, because art, we were at tables.

TB: Any more thoughts about the handwriting? A lot of people have commented about distinctive Campus School handwriting. Did you learn to do cursive or was it just printing?

BM: Cursive and printing. But then when you got older you weren’t making your „e“s this way, you were doing backward threes, being very sophisticated you know. Now my grandkids, their writing is terrible; you can barely read it, whereas Miss Gragg was right there with you. Either big lines on a page then there’s lines and do it that way, or larger or whatever she did. So she made you think about what you were doing. She was very good. God rest her soul.

TB: What kind of learning materials did you use mostly? Did you have regular school textbooks or materials created by your teachers?

BM: I don’t remember. I don’t think we carried too much to school. I think it was supplied. I don’t remember having homework. Maybe Margaret will tell you. Maybe we did later in the eighth or ninth. We did dissect. In the seventh grade or eighth, I don’t remember his name, but we dissected animals.

TB: Oh wow. What did you think about that?

BM: It smelled. I remember that. I can see him, I can’t recognize his name, but that was biology. So we learned that.

TB: What kind of grading system was in use during your attendance? Did you have letter grades or narrative reports?

BM: Letter.

TB: Do you especially remember any creative activities such as weaving or making things?

BM: No. One thing that I'm very proud of at Campus School was that they did honor Thanksgiving. Over in the Old Main auditorium there, all the classes would get there and they would have kind of a show. The ninth graders got to come in and hold bananas and we would all sing, *Come Be Thankful, People Come*.

TB: Nice.

BM: It was a celebration of Thanksgiving. When we were little, the May Day, the May Pole, the girls would dance around that.

TB: Wow. Now where was the May Pole located?

BM: In my mind I've got it right in front of the Campus School building, the new one, right out front. Maybe they were still doing the rocks, I don't know. We celebrated all these things.

TB: Let's talk a little bit about that. You mentioned it before we turned on the tape about the rocks when they were building the new school.

BM: Yes. It was a long length of grass but then they needed help to get all the rocks and pebbles and put them in containers. Another thing that was so great is that we couldn't wait for bad weather because then the sawdust truck couldn't make it. The schools used sawdust.

TB: Instead of salt, then? What was sawdust used for?

BM: For the furnace, for heat.

TB: Oh!

BM: So when the weather was bad, then we could get out of school because the sawdust truck couldn't make it up. So we were always hoping that the saw dust truck couldn't make it because it wasn't coal, it was sawdust then.

TB: So did you get fresh sawdust almost every day or just like once or twice a week?

BM: I don't remember.

TB: And that was probably still when you were in Old Main, is that right?

BM: Yes.

TB: Oh! That's cool.

BM: I think we had sawdust at the house and Darrell Crait, who lived next door to us, they had sawdust and we were always anxious to see if they could make it up the hill when we were in snow. We used to have more snow than we do now.

TB: Right. Wow. That could be important though at home, too. The sawdust truck might not get home and then it would be cold.

BM: It's not a garage but you open up something by the house and then they dump the sawdust down there. It was bins or something. You're making my mind work here!

TB: What was it like to be observed so often by student teachers?

BM: I don't remember it being a problem.

TB: Did you ever go to summer school at the Campus School?

BM: Yes. I had to go because I was lousy in math. I had to go to summer school once and I wasn't happy because the weather was too nice.

TB: Do you at all remember how they taught you math? Other people have had problems with math that were in the Campus School.

BM: Well we had [multiplication tables] you could look at, „*Seven times six is forty two*,“ so you would try and memorize those. I don't think I was very good at math.

TB: What out of classroom activities did you enjoy the most or did you engage in?

BM: Well, it was always a lot of PE things. I don't remember doing anything out of school. I had dance classes to go to. What was so fabulous was that we learned to play volleyball, we learned to play basketball and all that at the very beginning. They taught you teamwork.

TB: What out of classroom activities did you engage in? What did you do at recess, lunchtime, what did you enjoy the most and what games did you play?

BM: When we were in the seventh or eighth or ninth, after lunch we went into a room and danced. You learned to dance with girls so it helped you learn to dance and be good at it. We had field trips, I remember that. Identify trees and birds, and that was because we could go from Campus School right up on 18th Street and it was all woods. We had cards that showed you the birds and we tried to look for them. So again, what Campus School did was open all these eyes so you could see more than paperwork; and clouds in ninth grade. Because Mr. Ludwick had been in the military, they told us about clouds. Every time when there's a pattern then I know it's a cirrus cloud but don't ask me anything else! We had to memorize the different cloud patterns.

TB: Nice. Do you think on some of those walks, I'm going to call it the „nature walk,“ but whatever, was that often something that student teachers took you on do you remember or was it your regular teacher?

BM: You got me. I would probably think it would be student teacher, not teacher, because they were a little older. How old were our teachers? In their thirties and we thought they were old! I don't know how old Miss Kinsman was.

TB: Any other thoughts about what you usually did at recess?

BM: The boys played basketball or something and we jabber-jawed or danced. That was [when we were] older. I don't remember [before that].

TB: Did you visit the college itself very much or attend assemblies or sporting events that were at the college part?

BM: We went to concerts there or plays. I remember that. But I don't think we went to sporting things.

TB: At what grade level did you enter public school and why did you transfer and what was the transition like for you?

BM: When I left Campus School [I] went to Bellingham High School. What you did, you would go down to Adam's Style Shop and get a cashmere sweater so you would wear that to school the first day. What was so great was the other high schools getting together so those crowds, this crowd and then Campus School, we all got together and we would go to the Mt. Baker Theater to the movies and we would sit together. When we go to concerts I think, we were all down there! Fairhaven High School, a lot of the kids lived on 14th Street or whatever, so they got to be good friends because of location.

TB: So you didn't find it difficult to transition to public school?

BM: No, I didn't have a problem with that at all. I ended up going to Helen Bush in my senior year because I got tired of the same routine sort of stuff. I talked to my brother Barney. He said, "*I'll help you out. Think this through.*" So I did. I went to Helen Bush for my senior year, so I don't have an annual.

TB: Now where was that, down in Seattle?

BM: Seattle.

TB: It was a private school down there?

BM: Yes, a girls' school.

TB: Why did your brother Bill leave the Campus School a year before you?

BM: I think he got tired of it. Actually I think at Whatcom High School he had more fun. Dick was there, and all the guys. I have no idea.

TB: Please share any specific differences that you saw between public school and Campus School that especially affected you.

BM: Homework, I think! You say that and the first thing that comes to my mind is Miss Martin's Latin class. We had Latin class just before lunch and then after so we would go and then bring food back for her so we could shorten the class and learning [Latin phrase]. I think it was just more routine. Was it forty five minutes a class?

TB: Probably.

BM: Something like that. My brother Bob and Barney and Tom, Dick's brother, they used to do funny things. They let a cow go through Bellingham High School. I can't remember what else they did. I didn't want Mr. Emery to know my name because he remembered Bob and Barney! It was during the war era.

TB: What further education did you pursue (college, graduate or professional school)?

BM: I went to Stephens College in Missouri for two years.

TB: So you didn't attend Western and major in education.

BM: No. It's so funny because at Stephens with two years there I could teach preschool children if I was in Columbia, Missouri area, in the south. Coming here, I remember talking to Dorothy Button, she said no way after two years. You couldn't even walk in a door. So I didn't, and then when I married Dick and we were in Springfield, Virginia and the kids were older and we needed more money, I taught nursery school; two- and three-year-olds.

TB: How did you happen to decide to go to Stephens, or go to Missouri?

BM: What's the other girls' school in Colorado? There was another one. I have no idea. Susan Jones. Susan and I went to Stephens.

TB: Are you still in touch with any Campus School classmates? And if so, could you help us contact any of them?

BM: Sure. Gene Geske. I talked to her just the other day.

TB: Excellent!

BM: She's in Sun City. Susan Jones is down south a little bit, Seattle. Have you talked to Barbara (Lindy) Holmes?

TB: I think I have her address. But I know I don't know anything about Gene Geske.

BM: She wasn't very, quote, "smart," just about like me, but she ended up becoming very smart and she was an artist. She draws things. And she turned deeply religious. She married her husband and they were missionaries in Germany. She's the one that we scared the Boy Scouts! Don't forget that!

TB: Wow!

BM: Let's see, who else do I talk to? Sara I haven't talked to her in a long time. "Lindy" I saw the other day. It's so funny, you could live in Bellingham all your life and never run into anybody that you know!

TB: I would think that some of you guys would.

BM: The guy you said a few minutes ago, Larry Olsen, Dick sees him. Well, you'll be at Haggen and run into somebody. The thing is, at Dick's class reunion, God love them, they put the picture on the back so when you look at the front you know who they are because people have changed their looks!

TB: That's true.

BM: My first boyfriend was Phil Clarkson. He lived in Happy Valley. Do you know where Happy Valley is?

TB: Yes. I think he's another one we don't know where he is.

BM: I don't know if he's alive. The other one I was madly in love with was Norman Bemis. He passed away.

TB: What happened to Dick Wahl?

BM: He died maybe ten years ago or something. You should call Gene Geske's sister because she is married to Terry Wahl.

TB: Oh, okay, I know he was a news broadcaster or something, right?

BM: Yes.

TB: I heard about him in another context but I didn't realize he was in your class.

BM: I see Brian every now and again. He was with the downtown business.

TB: Do you know where Ken Wherry is?

BM: Yes, he is down in the Seattle area. We saw him I think last summer. He came up and we went out at the Marina. He used to be one of Bill's best friends and he was a Sigma Nu with Dick at the University of Washington.

TB: I don't know anything about Phil Clarkson, Darrell Crait, do you know where he is?

BM: No. I don't even think he went to Bellingham High School.

TB: And Barbara Dorsey? Do you know where she is at?

BM: No, I don't know. She was also in a religious missionary thing. It's got to be ten years since I have heard from Dorsey.

TB: But she did go onto Bellingham High?

BM: Yes.

TB: What about Joanne Holcomb? You don't have her on your list. She was in your class in sixth grade.

BM: I have no idea. I will probably wake up in the middle of the night, "Joanne Holcomb!"

TB: It must have been Jack, when I first saw „Jackie Longstreth“ I was thinking of a girl, but it's probably a boy, right? Jack.

BM: Yes. Longstreth.

TB: I know his dad was a doctor because that was my Grandpa's doctor I bet.

BM: All I can think of was we didn't like him or we did tricks on him, I remember that. Here's one about the war. We'd go trick-or-treat, Susan and I, on 17th Street and we'd do 15th and all that sort of stuff. A woman we went to trick-or-treat, she said, "*Don't you realize there's a war going on?*"

TB: Oh! And just didn't think it was appropriate then to be doing that?

BM: Yes.

End of Side One.

TB: We had a Richard Peters and you've got him as Dick Peters.

BM: Yes.

TB: Do you know what happened to him?

BM: No. The story about him was he was – on what day are you born that's [in] Leap Year? So he was never old, he was always younger! So we joked with him. He lived where old Saint Joe's is, he lived on that corner right there.

TB: Oh, okay; Tom Slipper?

BM: Oh, yes, you say that and I know where he lived, right on Garden Street.

TB: We have a Carol Ann Stuart and Donald Turcotte. Do you know anything about what happened to him? Did they all go on to Bellingham High School?

BM: Yes.

TB: What class would that be then? What was your graduating class from Bellingham High School?

BM: Remember, I didn't graduate.

TB: Well, so it would have been 1950.

RM: 1950.

TB: Would you be willing to serve as a contact person for your class for the purpose of encouraging participation in the reunion that they are going to have in 2007?

BM: Sure. I would love to because my cousins would love to come; Pat Templin and Judy Templin both went to Campus School.

TB: Okay, I think I have heard that name before but I want to make sure I get that from you before I go. Do you have any Campus School memorabilia, including photographs, class publications, crafts, artwork, etc. that you would be willing to let us borrow for the exhibit?

BM: Sure and I'll get you one right now because I found this and I don't know, I think this it was 1947 (referring to photograph).

TB: Please share any favorite memories of your Campus School days and then areas not covered by the questions above that you might want to talk about. One thing might be World War II and what it was like to be in school during World War II.

BM: Other than my telling you that we had to practice in case there was an air raid, I remember that. Not at school, but the windows all had to be covered at home. Mr. Wahl was the area warden. Mother worked at the Filter Center down there, all the soldiers were there, plotting airplanes and things. Our house, in case Saint Joe's burnt down, ours was [designated] a hospital, our basement. It was huge. All the supplies were downstairs, the beds and gauze and all that sort of stuff so that if there had been something there, our house would have been the hospital.

TB: Wow. So your mother had a job during the War, then?

BM: At the Filter Center and Red Cross.

TB: Okay, wow.

BM: Everybody was busy. My aunt Doris, my Mother's sister, worked at where the Bon Marché used to be. Boeing had a plant there.

TB: Really? Boeing was in Bellingham?

BM: Well a plant, yes. She worked there. We used to have all these ships come in; submarines and others.

TB: A busy time.

BM: Yes. That has nothing to do with Campus School.

TB: Well no, but Bellingham. Anything else I haven't asked you that you would like to talk about?

BM: I think we're fine. I'll get you those addresses. I've got Ken Wherry's.

TB: Excellent. I will say thank you very much.

BM: On behalf of a grateful nation, yes.