

Interview with Marjorie M. Porter (George's Marjorie)

Conducted by Shelly Bowe

with Stan Eckley, James Duncan, Amy Strickland, and Will Duncan in attendance
March 6, 2004

Marjorie Porter was interviewed as part of a workshop on how to conduct oral history interviews. This first page of comments were made before the interview officially began and was about the farm that Marjorie's family ran for many years.

Marjorie: Yes, um... the lady and her husband that bought it, uh, she is the daughter of... or step-daughter of Bob Durrer...

Voice: *Oh, okay...*

Marjorie: Robert Durrer...

Voice: *Oh, good, then it's still in production...*

Marjorie: Yes. Oh, yes, he's really a good farmer...

Voice: *They've got Holsteins, though, don't they?*

Marjorie: Well, they've bought five Jerseys and the milker doesn't like them... he doesn't care for the Jerseys... it's kind of a change, so...

Voice: *Yeah... well, people get used to certain things, and... I used to... when I first moved here we lived on South Prairie and we rented the old Quick place for quite a few years...*

Marjorie: Oh, yes, I knew the Quicks... uh, huh (yes)...

Voice: *And we had one little Jersey and she was... she ran the whole show... she was... all those other Holsteins would get in line behind her and she pretty much would tell them how it was gonna' be, and she was the lead cow...*

Marjorie: Oh, yeah...

Voice: *It was so funny...*

Marjorie: Well, the difference is the size, you know... they get in those stalls, and two Jerseys get in and turn around and... where one Holstein'll get in there and lay down and...

Voice: *Yeah...*

Marjorie: And they make a... you know... they make it different.

Voice: *But the Jerseys are sassy... they can hold their own...*

Marjorie: Oh, yes... you bet... those five kinda'... they don't let 'em bully 'em around...

Voice: *Exactly! (Laughing)*

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Marjorie: I have a good view of it, too, because the house sits up and I can see everything that goes on! (Laughing) I don't have to milk 'em!

(Laughter from all there)

Voice: *So, should we go here? Okay, well, we've got... I guess we should all introduce ourselves, but... I'll start... Marjorie, my name is Shelly Bowe, and you're Marjorie Porter...*

Marjorie: Yes...

Shelly: *And we're doing an oral history on you of you today, and you're kind of our... you're kind of helpin' us here... you're helpin' us walk through it, because I think everybody... this is the first time we've done this in any kind of official capacity...*

Marjorie: I see...

Shelly: *And, do you folks want to introduce yourselves?*

Voice: *Sure. I'm Stan Eckley, and I teach over here at the Youth Accountability Camp... I teach the young men that are in the prison system.*

Marjorie: Oh, I see...

Voice: *Oh, hi, I'm James Duncan. I help out... I actually help Shelley... gettin' ready to help her with a food history project...*

Marjorie: That's nice...

Voice: *Amy Strickland, and I teach at the Nestucca Valley High School.*

Voice: *I'm Will Duncan, and I work at the Tillamook School District.*

Marjorie: I see...

Shelly: *And we're pretty excited about all this... Dean just got us very fired up, but I'm gonna' go ahead and start asking some questions and.... it's a little bit hard, I know, when you've got to ask them and try to talk at the same time, so bear with me, and...*

Marjorie: Right, uh huh (yes)...

Shelly: *If I stumble or can't read my writing, but... we really wanted to ask you, first off... oh, I have to put the date, too, don't I? Today is March 6th, 2004. Um... we wanted to ask you where you were raised and wanted to know if you could tell us a little about your family before you moved to Tillamook.*

Marjorie: My family? Oh...

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Shelly: *Yeah... your family, when you were a youngster...*

Marjorie: Well, I was the fourteenth of fifteen children, and it was... what I remember is... the first thing was we had moved from Prosser, Washington where I was born to Columbia City... that's just north of St. Helens, and we moved into a big house, and I can remember when we first got electricity, 'cause my father put the gas lamp... he lit it and then he pushed it up, you know, with a chain to the ceiling... and, oh! Here was this old kerosene lamp sittin' there on the drain board, and I thought, "Boy, what an improvement! I can see everything!"

Shelly: *(Laughing)*

Marjorie: So, uh... we lived in that house 'til I was twenty-one... went to school at St. Helens High School and Columbia City Grade School... it's just a little hamlet there, and I had a paper route 'til I was a sophomore in high school... delivered about five miles of newspapers every day... Sundays we weren't able to pack 'em all... I and my sister, so our father went with us during the depression and he'd pack half of the town's papers down halfway through the town, and then we'd deliver the first part and then we'd meet him and take those paperboys and finish and he'd go home... so, uh... we kept up with the Sunday newspapers, too.

Shelly: *That's... that's really interesting, because we were gonna' ask you... uh, when you were a young girl, what were some of your typical Sunday activities, and it sounds like you worked hard on Sundays.*

Marjorie: Yes. Then when we got home, it was get yourself some breakfast and we're going to Sunday School, so... (chuckling)... then we had to go down through town to the little church they had there, so we spent Sunday usually at church, and then in the afternoon they'd have young people's meeting and we'd go back down there for that and in the evening we'd go back for church... so... my folks would go with us... yeah... so we were kept busy on Sunday.

Shelly: *How was your school experience when you were a girl different than how kids... how kid is now?*

Marjorie: Well, in grade school the school house was a lot like the one at Hemlock, only it had the hallway between the two classes... or between the two rooms, and there was one through four in one room and five through eight in the other room.

Shelly: *Did they have very many folks there? I mean, how big of a school all together...*

Marjorie: Oh, let's see... there was about thirty in each room... so...

Shelly: *Pretty good sized classes...*

Marjorie: Yes... at, uh... at one time it had two saw mills in it... that town...

Shelly: *Oh, wow...*

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Marjorie: So it was, uh... it was a busy town there... when I was a kid... of course, after... when the Depression started, you know, everything closed down... there was no work... my dad didn't work for two and a half years...

Shelly: *Did your dad work in the mills, or...*

Marjorie: Yeah, he worked in the mill at St. Helens, and he usually walked that two miles to work and back home at night after working nine hours.

Voices: *Wow... Hmmm... Boy...*

Marjorie: So it was...

Shelly: *The mills shut down, pretty much during the Depression...*

Marjorie: Yes, uh, huh (yes)... yeah, he didn't have any work for two and a half years...

Shelly: *How did things go for you folks, then, how did you feed your family?*

Marjorie: Well, us kids had two paper routes... I and my older sister, and... the two brothers that were home, one worked on a farm about a mile west of Columbia City toward Deer Island and Ranier... he worked on a farm there and went to school his seventh and eighth grade, and he had the... the school teacher lived in Deer Island and she would pick him up on the way to school at Columbia City, because she was a teacher...

Shelly: *Uh, huh (yes)...*

Marjorie: Mrs.: Livin...

Shelly: *And there were a lot of farms in that area, weren't there... I mean, there still are a lot...*

Marjorie: Well, little farms, you know... probably milking twenty, twenty-five cows... that was about all they could handle, because you milked by hand, you know...

Shelly: *Did you grow a lot of vegetables in that area, too, or was it mostly...*

Marjorie: Uh.... not too much... it was kinda' like a little mill town... little houses, you know, and not too much... we didn't have only about a lot for a garden...

Shelly: *Okay...*

Marjorie: But us kids would get out there and spade it up and plant some radishes and onions and lettuce, and my folks had... we always raised about a hundred chickens... you'd get 'em, you know, on the train... they'd send 'em from the hatchery, and you'd have to be home to get those chicks, and

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we'd raise that amount, and half of 'em, at least, would be roosters, so that was... that was, you know, for your own... you know, for your own family...

Shelly: *Yeah...*

Marjorie: So, on Sunday, that was chicken day, usually... you'd have chicken for... and the kids would have to do the lickin'... (laughing)... usually my job...

Shelly: *Well, if you wanna' eat, though, I mean...*

Marjorie: That's right!

Shelly: *Well, so what'd you do for fun when you were a girl there?*

Marjorie: Well, at school we played soccer, mainly, and usually it was the girls against the boys... we were a bunch of tomboys (chuckling)... livin' right along the river, you know, you learned how to row a boat and you learned how to play soccer or basketball or baseball... down below our house... right along the highway... 'course the highway has moved over a little bit... our house was up on the hill... and, uh... there was a big field and we'd get out there in the evening and we'd play baseball. Kids would just gather like fleas, you know, in the evening, so we'd play ball.... yeah...

Shelly: *I can almost get a picture...*

Marjorie: Oh, yeah, and then we'd sit around and gab, you know, 'til nine o'clock then we'd... our mothers would start saying, "You come home! It's bedtime."

Shelly: *So, when did you come to Tillamook, and what brought you here?*

Marjorie: Well, I met my husband in St. Helens. He came to St. Helens to work in the... take an apprenticeship in a garage, and he learned how to... oh, mechanically, and then he did the body and fender work and painting cars... I met him on a blind date...

Shelly: *(laughing)...*

Marjorie: That was funny... anyway, uh... I didn't know who he was, but my sister knew a Pella' that worked with my... you know, my husband-to-be... anyway, we were gonna' go to a show and we couldn't fit in a Chrysler Coupe, so we didn't go to the show... we waited 'til they got a bigger car and then they took us to the show.

Shelly: *That's great. So, you came to Tillamook...*

Marjorie: Yes....

Shelly: *Were you married in Columbia County, then, or did you come back to Tillamook to get married?*

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Marjorie: No, we were married in Columbia County, yes...

Shelly: *So, and then... you came back here 'cause your husband's family was here, or...*

Marjorie: Yeah, they lived down at East Beaver, on the farm...

Shelly: *Oh, okay... so that farm was his family's farm...*

Marjorie: Yes, they bought it in 1929...

Shelly: *Wow... so what was it like to marry... since you weren't a real... you know... you're a Tillamook girl now... but when you came here...*

Marjorie: Yeah, living...

Shelly: *How was it marrying into a Tillamook family? What was it like?*

Marjorie: Well, I was raised in that little town, and, you know, there wasn't any dairy farms... people had a cow, but... cookin' down to a farm, that was somethin' different, 'cause we only had three lots where our house was, and everybody worked out, but cookin' down... everybody worked on the farm... stayed at home... it was a change, I tell ya'...

Shelly: *Well, that's... I know where your farm is... it's out a ways...*

Marjorie: Yes...

Shelly: *I mean, you're...*

Marjorie: Yes... fifteen miles from Tillamook...

Shelly: *So you had a... you pretty much had a... an immediate family and kind of a large extended family when you moved back here, it sounds like, you know...*

Marjorie: Well, my husband was the oldest one, so the boys were... the three younger ones were at home...

Shelly: *So what did the extended family do... I mean can you tell us about his family, and then you had children...*

Marjorie: Yes. We had two boys when he went into the service, but at that time he... his brothers... one was going to school in St. Helens to work for the Boeing Company in Seattle, which he did before the war... well, before he went into the service, and the next one was a... well, he went into the Air Force, and the youngest one, he was too young to go into the service, so he stayed home and helped his dad during the war, and so when the boys were away from home, and my husband was in the service, I had to help on the farm... driving truck, or tractor, or you know... stuff like that... workin' in the garden...

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Shelly: *So your husband was... when did he go into... was it right after Pearl Harbor that he...*

Marjorie: No, he was deferred on account of his job with mechanical stuff... he was repairing trucks and stuff that was vital to the service, and so trying to maintain stuff without parts was very hard... you couldn't get a tire, gasoline was rationed, I think for the home family there was four gallons a week, and so you didn't go...

Shelly: *And you were fifteen miles out of town...*

Marjorie: Well, the farm was given a ration of... well, it was based on what your family produced, how much gas you used, like for, uh... well, harvesting your crop, or selling your product and so it was... it wasn't very excessive... it didn't allow you a lot of... you know, extra for anything... in fact, when my husband came home from the service for a furlough before he went overseas, he wanted me to meet him in Albany, and I didn't have the gas to go to Albany... it was that... 'cause the kids had been sick with earaches, and I had to come to Tillamook in an old '34 Pontiac... (chuckling)... sit three or four hours with two sick kids, and uh.... it didn't allow you a lot gas to... when you went to town you got what you needed and everything for a least a week, maybe two weeks, so it was difficult, it really was.

Shelly: *Did you have to do most of your shopping in Tillamook, or was there enough in...*

Marjorie: Yeah, in Tillamook...

Shelly: *Tillamook was where you had to come into, then, to get most of your things...*

Marjorie: Yeah, 'cause... there was, uh... well, there wasn't much... maybe... I think there was a couple gas stations in Beaver, but... you could get things, but they were high, you know... you had to... really had to get what you needed in Tillamook...

Shelly: *And so, your kids were born...*

Marjorie: In St. Helens...

Shelly: *In St. Helens... okay...*

Marjorie: Yes... Yeah, both of 'em were born over there...

Shelly: *You know, we didn't put it together very many questions, but we could probably talk to you all day...*

Marjorie: (Laughing)...

Shelly: *But you... I kinda' wish we'd put more in here about during the war and how you got by...*

Marjorie: Oh, yeah...

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Shelley: *I may even ask a couple more, if it's okay, 'cause I'm kinda' fascinated here, so I'm kinda' leavin' the script, but...*

Marjorie: Yeah...

Shelly: *When you were pretty much on the farm and, you know, you were having to do an awful lot of the farm work, um... they had you drivin' tractor, they had you milkin'... did you have help with the family, then? I mean, when you...*

Marjorie: Well, when the boys were home, they did the milking, but... then, when... let's see, just before the war they got into a... the folks had a gas motor, and they had, you know, pipes where they could use those round buckets that hung on the back that hung on the backs of the cows... you remember those... okay, they had those, only most of them then would sit on the floor... tall...

Shelly: *Yeah...*

Marjorie: And, so then, George's father would milk with the boys with those, and then to cool the milk, why they had a long trough underneath a spruce tree out from the house with water... spring water... and they would set those cans of milk in that at night to keep the... you know, keep 'em cool... and that was a real job in the summertime, you know, to try to keep that milk cool...

Shelly: *And those are heavy cans, aren't they?*

Marjorie: Oh, yeah... right... and then they washed them just out by the faucet and turned 'em upside down on a rack, and let 'em... you know, clean 'em that way... 'course they brought the hot water from the factories... you know... East Beaver had a factory, and when they would take the milk down in the cans, then they would wash the cans out and bring back hot water, and then you could do your washing, and you had hot water, and they'd wash the cans and put 'em on the rack outside....

Shelly: *So when you say the factory you mean this is the little creamery that was in...*

Marjorie: Yes... at East Beaver...

Shelly: *Okay... is that the old... is that the garage now?*

Marjorie: Yeah... right...

Shelly: *Oh, that's... okay... I knew that looked like a creamery but I've never... I'm so glad we're gettin' to chat about that...*

Marjorie: Yeah...

Shelly: *Yeah... did they make cheese actually there? Or did they...*

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Marjorie: Yes, they made cheese... you could go down there and get the curds and every year they'd go over and get the kids at the school and take 'em down and weigh 'em...

Shelly: *(laughing)*....

Marjorie: Each kid got weighed got weighed on that scale down there at the creamery...

Shelly: *(laughing)*.... *When we get done with this interview, I'll have to tell you a funny story...*

Marjorie: (chuckling)....

Shelly: *Well, and then, so... during that time that you were raising the kids and your husband was off to war, and even after the war, how did you mostly feed your family? Did you eat mostly off the farm, or did you buy it out of the store, or...*

Marjorie: Well, there's a garden... we had a garden spot that was about... uh, let's see... it was about 200 feet off of the road and 90 feet deep, and that was planted... I mean, we had raspberries... four rows of raspberries, uh... four rows of peas put up on wire, we'd have about thirty rows of corn... carrots... everything you can imagine...

Shelly: *And is there... was there an orchard, or trees, on the place?*

Marjorie: Well, the place was homesteaded by my mother-in-law's aunt and her husband... it was Henry Ely that homesteaded it... and this aunt came out of Canada and married him, and that was in the 1800's... in fact, the house... the original house is 100 years old this year, but the old man lived... they lived in a cabin back... he had planted an orchard, and he built a barn first, and the original barn is the front part of it... still there... the big cedar posts in it are like they were when he built it... solid as a rock... and Bruce just... he just can't... he's amazed at, you know... that old barn... he says, "Man!" he says... "Whoever put that up was really a carpenter!" Well, Mr. Ely did have a man come and work for his board and room when they were building that barn, so he had help.

Shelly: *Well, building something really good in the beginning sure pays off.*

Marjorie: Yes, it did...

Shelly: *Doin' it right the first time...*

Marjorie: Right...

Shelly: *Well, we... I'm gonna' ask you a little bit... we understand... Dean told us you were pretty involved with the grange...*

Marjorie: Yes, I...

Shelly: *And still am, it sounds like...*

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Marjorie: Yes... other than during the war when I moved to... we moved to Astoria, then I took a demit, because that was in 1946, and then we were up there until '53 and I took a demit out of the grange at Pleasant Valley and when we came back we picked up on it again, and so I just received my fifty year pin...

Shelly: *Congratulations!*

Marjorie: Yes... they gave it to me at the grange meeting in January at Pleasant... at Fairview because they had come so close to abandoning it at Pleasant Valley, that I went up to Fairview because they were more active, I thought, well, I could help 'em out there, so I just transferred over... up there.

Shelly: *Yeah, important stuff to keep alive...*

Marjorie: Yes...

Shelly: *So I... we didn't know that you had left Tillamook for a while... when you... you were in Astoria, then, for six, seven years.... what...*

Marjorie: No, we built a house in Warrenton...

Shelly: *Oh, in Warrenton...*

Marjorie: ...and got out of that housing project 'cause there was 240 rentals and there was... well, there was just lots of people, you know, and lots of kids, and it was quite congested... out from this little two bedroom apartment you had about that much yard and there was a clothes line and... (chuckling)... and everything else... and you burnt coal... there was a coal bin there, and there was just no place for the kids to play except in the street, and it was cheap, you know... it was thirty... thirty-five dollars a month and that included your water and your lights...

Shelly: *Oh, you can't even pay for your water for that now! (laughing)...*

Marjorie: No... (laughing)...

Shelly: *So, your husband worked in Astoria during that time... was he in...*

Marjorie: Yes, he worked in a body... he worked for a Jeep outfit on Commercial Street... Mackie's... and he worked up at Fort George... that's up near the old hospital... right across the street from it... he worked in the garage there, did the body and fender work... car painting and that kind of stuff...

Shelly: *Did you stay at home, or did you work outside of the home during this time? Were you....*

Marjorie: I didn't go to work until... we live... we were building a house in Warrenton, and I went to work in the cannery... San Juan... uh, huh (yes)...

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Shelly: *Boy, I want to talk to you about that later on, too... (laughing)... so you worked in the cannery when you were up in Astoria for a little bit of time...*

Marjorie: Yes...

Shelly: *...and then you did come back to Tillamook, though...*

Marjorie: Yes, he... oh, I don't know... his folks were selling the farm, and he hated to see it, you know... go into another family and be out of our... well, he wanted the kids to be acquainted with the farm when they grew up, so we moved back...

Shelly: *And then you picked up the dairy, and you dairied up until...*

Marjorie: Yes, uh, huh (yes)...

Shelly: *... you did get to have your kids on the farm...*

Marjorie: Yes... we were all away from the home by the time we... my husband got sick...

Shelly: *So, I... I may have to rephrase these questions just a little bit, but you worked outside of the home up in Astoria, and then you worked a lot on the farm...*

Marjorie: Yes... uh, huh (yes)...

Shelly: *Did you... what did you like best? Did you like working at the cannery more, did you like working on the farm more... what was your favorite...*

Marjorie: Oh, I think the farm work was the best, because I was outside a lot... I liked that... when you're standing in ice water and fish gloves on all day and a sharp knife... (chuckling)... you're glad when that eight hours is over...

Shelly: *So what do you like best about livin' in Tillamook County... or Beaver?*

Marjorie: Well, I just like Tillamook County... I got so used to it... I go to the valley and it's too warm and I can't hardly stand it 'til I get back home.

Shelly: *Yeah, I understand... so, we overheard Amy talking with you a little bit before... heard you've done quite a bit of traveling... and that you like to travel, it sounds like, so do you want to share some of your travel experiences with us?*

Marjorie: Well, when we were on the farm, the only vacation we took was when my husband wanted to go hunt in eastern Oregon, so we'd get his old Jeep all fired up and away we'd go, and camp with some of my family and some of his family and we'd go clear over to... oh, heavens, I can't even think of the name of it now... anyway, it was way over there near Lone Prairie... I guess most of you know where Lone Prairie is... John Day... in that area... so we'd go over there and camp for usually about a week, and then we'd come home and then he'd go with Dean's dad and some of the fellas around

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Beaver and they'd go over and spend another ten days over there and I'd stay home with the kids, and I enjoyed that because I'd go to the ball games with the kids in the evening...

Shelly: *And so, some of your other travels of recent... you've been further than eastern Oregon, we hear...*

Marjorie: Oh, yeah... yeah... went to Alaska on the first cruise, and that was really a nice... there was twenty-four of my family that went on that one, and we just had a grand time...

Shelly: *Like a family reunion...*

Marjorie: Yes, it was... yeah... then the next one we went to the Caribbean, and I think sixteen on that one...

Shelly: *Start a tradition... (laughing)...*

Marjorie: Yeah... (laughing)...

Shelly: *Well, so when you came down to Tillamook and you married into the Porter family, all of a sudden you're related to a whole bunch of folk... so, just some of the families, some of those Tillamook names that we know... so who are you related to now that you weren't related to when you came to Tillamook?*

Marjorie: Well, let's see, uh... one son's married to the youngest daughter of Fritz and Vi Vermilyea, and uh... Gene married Pam... oh, what was her last name? They live up north... one is a plumber... John... not John... Bob...

Voices: *(throwing out different names...)*

Marjorie: Brattner... yeah... I think one 'em's in jail over there, isn't he?

Stan: *(laughing)...* I don't know...

Marjorie: (laughing)... I know he is... but I guess we can't live their lives...

Shelly: *Every family's got it...*

Marjorie: Yeah, you can't get away from it...

Shelly: *So, if you could just, you know, step back, would you do anything majorly different with your life, or are you feeling pretty good...*

Marjorie: I don't think I would... I think I've enjoyed it... I've had a Four-H club, calf club for five years and enjoyed that, and I helped with Four-H leaders, I made sure I got to those meetings... yeah, it's been good, and I did a lot of volunteer down at Nestucca when the kids were in high school, and at the grade school I was PTA chairman a couple of times at Beaver, and, you know, I've tried to be

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active while my kids was in school... they put on those turkey dinners down there... I was in on the start of that, too...

Shelly: *I have a terrible tickle (in her throat)... I'm going to let somebody else take over... I have to go cough... do you mind stepping in for a second... 'cause I don't want to mess up the tape... I apologize...*

Amy: *So, how many children did you have... do you have?*

Marjorie: Four...

Amy: *Four...*

Marjorie: Three boys, one girl... uh, huh (yes)...

Amy: *And they all went through local schools?*

Marjorie: Nestucca High School... yeah...

Amy: *Which elementary schools did they go to?*

Marjorie: There at Beaver...

Amy: *The Beaver one...*

Marjorie: Uh, huh (yes)... yeah...

Amy: *And do you remember any of their teachers?*

Marjorie: Oh, let's see... Mr. Steubs, and Wally Nelson, and uh... oh... McKillip, you know, he was on the school board for years down there, and the... let's see, what's that fella's name... he lives back there near the old plug mill... built a house back there... he was principal there for a long time... still there, you know... he still lives down there...

Amy: *So, in our conversation you mentioned that you sold the dairy... when did you get out of the dairy business?*

Marjorie: Well, my husband died in 1991, and later, Bruce told me he'd been lookin' at the farm for at least three years, hoping he'd be able to buy it, and so in 1992, well, I sold it to them. They took possession in March of '93. They have twin boys and...

Stan: *I'm sorry, I wanted to ask... who is Bruce? Is that a family member?*

Marjorie: No. He married Sandy Durrer... that's Bob Durrer's step-daughter...

Stan: *Okay...*

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Marjorie: You know the Durrer's, don't you...

Voices: *(indistinguishable)*...

Marjorie: Uh, huh... yeah...

Stan: *Okay...*

Marjorie: And they have twin boys, 'bout ten years old, and they're really growin' fast...

Amy: *Is it... is it fun and does it bring back memories of raising your family, watching another family...*

Marjorie: Oh, yes...

Amy: *What kind of memories does it bring up?*

Marjorie: Well, my youngest one, you know, he was born there when we were on the farm, and I think he was the only... he was the first boy ever born there on that farm, so this brought back memories... I see those kids out there, you know, and they're like all... ridin' a bicycle, kickin' a ball, and it's fun to watch 'em... they come up and trick-or-treat me at Halloween (laughing)... and I tease 'em... which one's Casey and which one's Cody... they're really cute.... yeah, you see the milk truck come and go, and the hay truck, and... it's uh... it brings back memories... and you used to have to pitch those bales off, you don't get a squeeze thing to put 'em up there... and teach the kids to back up a trailer load of hay... (chuckling)... that's a lot of memories...

Amy: *Would you like to share any of your memorable stories?*

Marjorie: Well, when the kids were small, my husband always went around Halloween in eastern Oregon, and I thought, "Well, the kids are in school", so I went down to the crick and I thought, "Gee, the fish are running." So we'd had a dory that we'd built in the shed, and it's still being used... anyway, I got the net out of the boat, and I thought, "Boy, I can catch me a small fish." Well, I reached out there and it wasn't a small fish... (laughter from others)... he weighed 52 pounds... (more laughter from others)... well, he took me around alder trees, over rocks, through blackberries, but I finally got where I had one hand on the thing, and I had ahold of a tree and I just swished him up on the rocks, and the youngest one got off of the bus about that time, and I hollered, "Gene, come here!" And he says, "Where are you?" And I said, "Down behind the shed." I said, "Be sure and bring the wheelbarrow!" (much laughter)... So here he come with the wheelbarrow, and the fish just laid in the wheelbarrow like that and I thought, "Oh, boy! How am I gonna' get him across the road?" Well, we watched the traffic for a while, and of course there isn't very much up that road, so... we got him over to the house and I got the scales in his gill and held him up, and I had the scales up to my chin and his tail was on the floor. (chuckling)... There... it was really a high.. you know, a lot of rain, and flooding, but it had cleared off, and they had come up so fast he didn't have any lice on him or anything... I had no business doing that, I could have been arrested! (lots of laughter)

Stan: *But it makes a great story...*

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Marjorie: But... if he'd a caught me, huh? But anyway...

Shelly: *He was probably proud as punch of ya' anyway...*

Marjorie: Yeah, and I tried to keep that seven-year-old quiet, is somethin' else... (laughing)... let him go to school... (much laughter)... I don't know if he told anybody... but, uh... yeah, so I filleted him that night while the kids went down... I took 'em down to the grade school to the Halloween party, and went back home and got that fish ready to smoke... anyway, I got it canned and everything, and my husband come home and he says, "Somebody's been usin' the smokehouse."

And says, "Yeah, it was used." And then he went in the pantry and he seen all the pint jars, so he knew I'd been busy. But it was a beautiful fish for a fall fish.

Yeah, it was fun to take the kids to the fair. You know, when you get about twenty kids, mostly boys, and they've got so many ideas and things to do, but they were sure a great group. And most of them don't call me Mrs. Porter, they call me Marge, even now. (chuckling)... But they all, you know, placed pretty good, and I'd tell 'em, be sure and wash your ears as well as the calf's and shine your shoes and clean your fingernails, and I'd look 'em over good before they went out to the judging ring.

Amy: *The boys and the calves...*

Marjorie: Yeah, you bet, you have to... (laughter) yeah... and of course, most of 'em stayed in the dorm, and they were good, you know, even my kids... my daughter, and two of the boys they stayed in there... the youngest one, he wasn't as interested as staying in there... he took some ducks and found out they were both drakes and he got a blue ribbon and that was the end of his experiences with Four-H (chuckle)... he went through it all with the other three... My daughter, she carried at least five projects... darndest kids for all that stuff, and she's still that way. She gardens, and she sews and she drives school bus and everything else... goes swimming... so they've been pretty active.

Shelly: *Do your kids all live in the county still, are they all pretty close, or...*

Marjorie: No, the oldest one lives at Stayton... he's retired from teaching, but he still goes back and... he's in Seaside now helping with the track program... taking the kids down, and... from... he taught thirty years at Stayton... took his practice teaching there and he never had to look for a contract after that. That was... and you know, he's still interested in schools... he goes back and substitutes... all up and down the Santiam Valley... any school... he helps 'em out... most of the teachers that retired, they'll go into Salem 'cause they make more money, but then they have to dress better and, you know, and their gas and everything, and of course, it's more expensive... but he says, "They helped me, I'm gonna' stay at home and help them." And he's been very much in civic duties... he was mayor for eight years, and on the city council... I think he's still on that... so he's been very involved in that town... they had a... oh, I don't know... juveniles or somebody... they had a bridge in their park... a little covered bridge, you know, and it just burnt down and they never did find out what happened, but a group of 'em got together and they rebuilt that bridge, and put it back in the park, so it's still an addition, and it fulfills a need, you know... people can look in the park and see what they've done and it shows the old covered bridge... it's quite nice... 'course, soon as they got it built, I had to

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go out and see it... he had to come and get me and take me out there. I think they spent every Saturday for... what was it? A couple years, gettin' that built... just volunteer work... so he's had quite an involvement in the city and the school...

Shelly: *And is he one of your kids that has the grandkids so they can over and visit you?*

Marjorie: He has one granddaughter and she lives in Lynchburg, Virginia.

Shelly: *Oh, so you do have family far away, too...*

Marjorie: Yes, uh... he just went back there... she... his daughter went to school back there at a women's college and married a fella back there that went to a men's college. And that's how they met... was when they had dances, why, they'd invite the other school to come, and she went back there and they bought an old home and remodeled it and she has just gotten her... she graduated from police school, so she is a policeman in Lynchburg, Virginia. And her husband is thinking about going into it, too. And the little girl is five. So my son flew back there for her graduation. His wife couldn't go... she's under a doctor's care, so she couldn't fly, so... that was this... I think it was in November she got her diploma from the college... so I got a picture of her.

Voice: *So, is there anything else?*

Shelly: *I apologize. That tickle got me, and I just...*

Marjorie: Oh, yeah...

Shelly: *And I just knew I couldn't go any further...*

Voice: *As a procedural thing... we need your mailing address, so that we can mail...*

Marjorie: It's 22655 East Beaver Creek Road, Cloverdale... see, we get the mail around... they go through Sandlake and come around and pick us up. Because otherwise we'd be gettin' out mail at the highway, and it's too busy for people runnin' across the road to get the road to get their mail, so we went that route.

Shelly: *Is the tape still on?*

Other voice: *We're about to the end of side one....*

Marjorie: You probably should put my middle... put Marjorie M., because I have a sister-in-law in Tillamook, her name is Marjorie Porter, too...

Amy: *Two in one county!*

Marjorie: And we were neighbors, and they'd say, which one are you, the tall one or the short one?

Stan: *So, which one are you? The tall one or the short one?*

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(Lots of laughter)

Marjorie: I'm the tall one (laughing)... she isn't much shorter, but there was a distinction, you know... or I was...

Shelly: *I have to ask you... livin' up East Beaver... 'cause you're kinda' at the end of that valley there before you get pretty much into the wild country... what kind of critters have you seen come through there?*

Marjorie: Oh, my... I've had turkeys... they've planted turkeys up there, and the other day there was a coyote runnin' down the driveway, and...

(end of first side of tape)

Marjorie: ...only it's seven miles around if you want to go visit Measors... (chuckling)...

Stan: *It's faster to walk...*

Marjorie: Yeah... so... there used to be that the girl that lived on the farm when... they had one girl, and the... the Elys... they would walk to school over on Wolf Creek, and that's where Measors lived... you'd just go over and up a... down the hill... but there was an old homestead up there that was... they called it the Coulson place, and then Parkers owned it, and the kids used to go across until they built a school on East Beaver Creek... it was just up above the farm buildings... just up around the turn, and you could look right up at an old orchard up there... but my husband went to school two years there before they built the Hemlock School.

Shelly: *And the Hemlock School is now the grange, right? Isn't that the...*

Marjorie: That's the Masonic Building...

Shelly: *Oh, is that the Masonic...*

Marjorie: Yeah... Hemlock... uh, huh (yes)...

Shelly: *So where is the Hemlock School? Is it gone?*

Marjorie: No, that's it...

Shelly: *Oh, that is it... that all is the same... oh, okay...*

Marjorie: But East Beaver Creek School... my husband towed it down the road and took the front off of it and used it for a place to put his dump truck. Dean can show you pictures of that. But it was going to pieces, and it was just a little bit of a thing... I said well, it was about the size of a two car garage, but it wasn't... it was about the size of just the width of the truck... the dump truck (chuckling)...

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Shelly: *You were talking about your turkey dinners earlier... at the grange... and honest to God... the best dinner I've ever had in my life...*

Marjorie: Oh, yeah...

Shelly: *Or those... the pies there... I mean... probably fifteen years ago...*

Marjorie: Oh, yeah...

Shelly: *... and I... I went there, and we had a turkey dinner, and the pies that you had lined up before you came in... it was like, forget the turkey dinner! I was going for pies!*

Marjorie: (laughing)... Yeah, we... I think there was a couple of us baked the pies... I baked part of 'em...

Shelly: *Oh, boy... They were just...*

Marjorie: They'd go crazy over lemon pie...

Shelly: *And rightly so... (chuckling)...*

Marjorie: Yeah, I think this last dinner we had I baked, uh... what was it... I think twelve...

Stan: *Do you have a favorite pie you like to make?*

Marjorie: Well, I get a lot of... well, apple, or rhubarb, or lemon...

Other voice: *A good rhubarb pie is hard to beat...*

Marjorie: Oh, you bet!

Shelly: *You're making us hungry...*

Other voice: *I know...*

Shelly: *And we just ate lunch...*

Marjorie: I've had a time with moles, and everytime I plant rhubarb, they just... I don't know what it is about it... they wanna' eat... yeah! And I can't keep it, so I got two barrels, and I've got.. I'm ready to get some rhubarb plants and have me some rhubarb where those moles can't get at it!

Shelly: *Do you not have any plants?*

Marjorie: Well, they uproot 'em and eat 'em, or... they just destroy 'em... the moles... or rats...

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Shelly: *I could get you some... I have three great big plants if you want me to get you some starts...*

Marjorie: Oh, boy, I'd love that!

Shelly: *I'll get you... I'll make sure I get your phone number, 'cause after about five or six years they just get so big you gotta' break 'em up...*

Marjorie: Oh, yeah, and you have to... I had a whole row down at the farm, and, boy, I had more fun... had all the rhubarb I wanted... gave it away... I used to give away more vegetables than we used... and I canned continually, up until the first part of the year... I would still be fixing apples, to freeze or can applesauce... I'd do over a thousand quarts, beside the freezers full... three freezers full...

Shelly: *But you know what... it tastes so much better... boy...*

Marjorie: Well, I canned apple cider in half gallon jars... I mean... you ain't gonna' can it in quarts for six or eight people, you know... that's not... so I'd have... over the sink, there was all these shelves, and I would have at least a hundred quarts of cider, then applesauce, sauerkraut, everything...

Shelly: *Did you have your own press?*

Marjorie: Oh, yeah...

Shelly: *Yeah, you... okay...*

Marjorie: My youngest son still has it... sittin' on his back porch... (chuckling)... there at Pleasant Valley... it needs some work... my husband rebuilt it three times... but it was one of the first things I think they had when they planted the orchard and it started to produce... I think that was the first thing that they bought... was that cider press... it's got two barrels, you know, with staves that... oak staves that run up and down, and then you got the handle and you grind 'em and they go into the barrels and then you change 'em, you know... fill... and then you put the wooden block on top and then a metal piece, and then you... you know... you tighten it down, and the juice runs down... and, oh, it's good! That's the real McCoy! (chuckling)...

Stan: *Yeah... did you ever do anything with the pulp that was left over after you squeezed the juice out? Give it to the hogs or something...*

Marjorie: They used to... but we didn't... George's dad kept pigs, but my husband didn't like 'em, so... he would put it out under the apple tree and the deer would eat it...

Stan: *The deer would come in...*

Marjorie: And he'd bait 'em, see... (laughing)

Stan: *(Laughing)... I know exactly what you're talking about... between that and the salt block, you got 'em... (everyone laughing)...*

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Marjorie: Oh, yeah... the mineral block... they like that... oh, boy... and if you put a little alfalfa out there you know... (more laughing)...

Shelly: *You know all the tricks! Well, thank you so much... I...*

Marjorie: I think I've kept you over an hour...

Everyone: *No problem... It's been fascinating, though... Thanks for coming and talking with us today... Thank you...*

Marjorie: And you know, we used to have more fun with Dean's family... his mom and dad were just such wonderful people...

Stan: *So you probably know some real good stories about him when he was a kid... (laughing)...*

Marjorie: Oh, yeah... well, he took my... him and my daughter went to the junior prom together... yeah... I've got... they've got pictures, and I have too... she'd even made her dress, and he come up and gave her a corsage... a real gentleman... yeah... they had lots of friends... they were good friends all through their growing-up years... we were either down to Boneses or they were up at our house... very good people... and it's sad to see his mother, you know, is having quite a time... she fell and just about killed herself on those steps... well, he's probably told you about it, huh? The house... you went into the... well, just a little area, and then the basement steps went down... a bunch of 'em... concrete... and then you went up the other way up into the kitchen... well, she fell down those steps... and then here she fell again and broke her hip, so she's had quite a... I haven't seen her... I was gonna' go down to Lincoln City to the hospital and I... I didn't get to do it...

Stan: *I think she's in Kilchis House now...*

Marjorie: Yeah, she said today that they did take her in to be with Ray... and that's good... I'll go and visit 'em there... yeah, she's had quite a lot of trouble here lately... wonderful person... when she was well, she could tell you some of the cutest jokes... oh, I tell ya'... very nice person...

Shelly: *Sure raised a nice son, didn't she?*

Marjorie: Yes, they are a very nice family... uh, huh (yes)...

Shelly: *What I want to do is I wanna' get your phone number, though, because I'm gonna' be tearin' up that rhubarb pretty soon... probably this next week... what I can do is call ya'...*

Marjorie: Yes...

Shelly: *Is my pen there... did I lose it when I was coughin'?*

Voices: *Here Shelly... you can use this one... no, but you can borrow mine...*

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Shelly: *Oh, okay... I got this one here... when I started coughin' I thought I'm gonna' mess up the tape and they're gonna' have to start all over again...*

Marjorie: It's 398-XXXX...

Shelly: *Okay... and rhubarb for Marjorie...*

Marjorie: Well, I've buggin' Sanders thinkin' they'd have some rhubarb in, but they haven't though...

Shelly: *Well, I need to just... I just... you know... I put it in, and it's just been gettin' bigger and bigger...*

Marjorie: Oh, wow! I'd love that...

Shelly: *It's funny how some places you'd have critter problems...*

(End of tape)

Transcribed by Darleen Cole
February 28, 2005