

Oral History Interview
with
Carolyn Garber

Interview Conducted by
Latasha Wilson
October 28, 2011

O-STATE Stories
Oral History Project

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O-State Stories

An Oral History Project of the OSU Library

Interview History

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The recording and transcript of this interview were processed at the Oklahoma State University Library in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Project Detail

The purpose of O-STATE Stories Oral History Project is to gather and preserve memories revolving around Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College (OAMC) and Oklahoma State University (OSU).

This project was approved by the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board on October 5, 2006.

Legal Status

Scholarly use of the recordings and transcripts of the interview with Carolyn Garber is unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed on October 28, 2011.

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About Carolyn Garber...

Carolyn Garber has strong family roots in Stillwater. Her grandfather helped establish a Lutheran church here in the early 1900s which is still standing, and Carolyn grew up on a farm that was in her family for more than eighty years. After she graduated from Stillwater High School, she enrolled at Oklahoma State University (OSU) in 1957 with a strong interest in home economics, nutrition, and dietetics. At OSU, she pledged Alpha Chi Omega and spent a lot of time in the library and the Student Union. She participated in homecoming, went to sporting events, and worked part-time to help pay her way through school. She was in the Home Economics Club, Lutheran Student Association, University Religious Council, and Mortar Board. She loved and treasured campus and the college experience, as a whole, and found it to be a life-changing experience.

After graduation, she went to Europe with a Lutheran study project and then began a dietetic internship at University of Chicago. She later went to Michigan State to earn her master's degree in nutrition where she met her husband. In 1967 they moved to South Bend, Indiana, where they still reside. Carolyn and her husband, now both retired, enjoy traveling when they can, and in 2011 they returned to Stillwater to celebrate Carolyn's fifty-year reunion at OSU.

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Carolyn Garber



Oral History Interview

Interviewed by Latasha Wilson
October 28, 2011
Stillwater, Oklahoma

- Wilson** *My name is Latasha Wilson, and I'm with the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program at the OSU Library. Today is October 28, 2011, and I am talking with Carolyn Garber here at the OSU Library. Thank you for being with us today.*
- Garber** Well, thank you. It's a pleasure, Latasha.
- Wilson** *Welcome back to OSU for your fifty-year class reunion.*
- Garber** Yes. (Laughs)
- Wilson** *Are there any particular reasons why you decided to attend your reunion?*
- Garber** It worked out really well because last Saturday night was the one hundredth birthday for the church that my family actually started. My grandfather was a charter member of that church, so we decided to extend our vacation (well, we're retired now, so no days of vacation anymore) to this weekend so I could also go to the fiftieth reunion. I probably would've come anyway, but it really worked out well.
- Wilson** *And that church was in Stillwater?*
- Garber** Yes, and it was Salem Lutheran Church.
- Wilson** *Oh, wow!*

Garber It started out, actually, about seventeen miles west of here. It was called the Friedens Church when it began, but in 1911 [the church was built in Stillwater and named Salem Lutheran Church and was located on Ninth and Duncan Streets.].

Wilson *Wow, that's neat.*

Garber Yes, so that was a great celebration, and I'm looking forward to this one.

Wilson *Are there any particular events or things you're interested in doing while you're here, centered around Homecoming?*

Garber I am taking in everything that they have assigned me to or that they have put on the list. (Laughter) My husband is being very gracious and is attending most of those things with me. Today we have this wonderful coffee at ten o'clock at the College of Human Sciences and then a luncheon, and this afternoon we're going to do a golf [cart] tour of the campus. This campus has expanded greatly. This campus is one of the most beautiful campuses, and I have been to many because my husband was in college administration. I've been to many campuses, but this is just still one of the top. It is a beautiful campus.

Wilson *Well, let's back up a little, and tell me about your early life, where you were born and...*

Garber Okay. I was born on a farm northwest of Stillwater, Oklahoma, in 1940. That farmhouse still exists. We no longer own that. It was sold, I believe, in maybe 1996. My parents, of course, are both deceased, but this was a family farm that was in the family from about 1913 to 1996.

Wilson *Wow.*

Garber So that's where I lived. I lived in that house and went to school at Oklahoma State University.

Wilson *And you graduated from Stillwater High School?*

Garber Graduated from—then it was Stillwater High School, yes.

Wilson *What year did you graduate?*

Garber Nineteen fifty-seven.

Wilson *Did you always know that you would attend OSU since you were from Stillwater?*

Garber Yes. At that time, there weren't too many students from Stillwater High School that went out to other places. Many of us went to Oklahoma State University. I think there were a few that went to other schools. Today, I think kids spread out a little bit more, but in those days we all just wanted to—it was Oklahoma State.

Wilson *Were you a first-generation college student, or had your parents attended?*

Garber No, my parents hadn't, but I have two uncles that have at least bachelor's degrees, and one has a master's degree from OSU. At that time, it was Oklahoma A&M. But neither parent, no.

Wilson *Do you have siblings?*

Garber I have three siblings, and one graduated, also, from OSU and has a master's from OSU. The other two attended but did not graduate from OSU.

Wilson *So you started in 1957.*

Garber Nineteen fifty-seven, and I graduated in 1961.

Wilson *And did you live at home your first year, or did you move onto campus?*

Garber Most of the time I either lived at home or with a sister in town or my grandmother. I only lived on campus for about nine weeks, and that was in the sorority house my senior year.

Wilson *What sorority was that?*

Garber Alpha Chi Omega.

Wilson *Okay. Did you decide your major from the beginning?*

Garber Very early. As a young child, I decided I wanted to teach home economics. That was because a wonderful home demonstration agent came out to a one-room country school where I went to school my first seven years, and I just thought that'd be the neatest job in the world, and I never left that idea. (Laughs) I have no idea, but I've always enjoyed it. Then I got more interested in the dietetics world, and so I put the emphasis on dietetics rather than just home economics education.

Wilson *What was the name of the one-room school you attended?*

Garber Fair Plains.

Wilson *And where was that located?*

Garber It was, again, northwest of Stillwater. I believe it's called Lakeview Road, now.

Wilson *Okay.*

Garber That school is no longer in existence, period. My father was president of the school board there, and we were active. But then, of course, it got annexed to Stillwater schools because we only had, I think, thirteen in the school in my seventh grade. (Laughter)

Wilson *Then did you ride the bus into Stillwater?*

Garber We did. We rode the bus every day. Yes, we did. It was a long ride. Kids complain about that today, but we had a long ride. I bet you it was at least forty-five minutes long...

Wilson *Wow.*

Garber ...but we just did it. We just did it.

Wilson *Did you live on the farm the whole time you were growing up?*

Garber Yes, I did. I did until I left here in 1961.

Wilson *What were some classes that you particularly remember?*

Garber I really liked my nutrition classes, and I liked my chemistry classes. I thought the chemistry teachers were just fantastic. I suppose those were my top classes that I really appreciated so much. Of course, I liked all of the classes over in the College of Human Sciences. That's what it's called now. I thought the teachers were very caring, and they got you very involved. We had smaller classes, so I appreciated that. I would say those were my favorites.

Wilson *Were there any faculty members that were particularly influential in your development?*

Garber I was trying to think of names because I thought you might ask me that question. The nutrition instructor, Miss Leidigh, Mary Leidigh, was in food nutrition for a long time and even sent us wonderful newsletters after we graduated, which I thought was very nice. Miss [Mary] Currier—I believe it started with a C. I think it was Currier. She was a wonderful nutrition teacher. I was trying to think of my chemistry

teacher. I knew my high school chemistry teacher, but I could not remember the name of that chemistry teacher. I can picture her, but I'd need to look through my yearbook, I guess, to figure that out. By the way, in those days, we had the *Redskin*. I have no idea if you still do this at OSU, but we had these wonderful, huge yearbooks that had everything in them. Maybe that's changed, too.

Wilson *It has. They don't do those anymore, (Laughter) but during Homecoming, the library sets out a collection of the Redskins down in the lobby so people that are here for Homecoming can look through.*

Garber Well, I have my *Redskins*, and I still look back through them. People will look through that now and say, "Oh, my! Look at that," because even looking at the basketball uniforms, you realize how much things have changed.

Wilson *Yes. Do you remember any buildings that your classes were in?*

Garber Oh, sure. The College of Human [Sciences], that building is still in existence because that's the one we're going to today. The food nutrition classes were in a small little building on more of the eastern side of the campus. I don't know if that building is still there or not. It was old and kind of a derelict then. I don't know if it still exists. The Classroom Building. A lot of our chemistry labs were in Quonset huts just on the north side of this library. Those are probably all gone.

Wilson *Yes, they are.*

Garber The Classroom Building, is that still in existence? That's where a lot of our main classes were in those days.

Wilson *Did you have any classes in Old Central?*

Garber English class. I took summer school, I believe it was either between my senior in high school and freshman year. I took English. That was in Old Central. That was the only class I had in Old Central. I'll be sure and show my husband that today, Old Central. Really nice that they've kept that as it should be for historic sake. That is a very important building because I believe it was the first building on this campus.

Wilson *I think so, and now the Honors College is held there.*

Garber Oh, okay. Oh, that's good.

Wilson *They've really done some nice improvements to it recently.*

Garber That's wonderful.

Wilson *Did you study in the library?*

Garber Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Many, many nights were spent in the library.

Wilson *Did you have a favorite spot?*

Garber We called them carrels in those days. "Which carrel were we going to?" Sometimes on first floor, either end of the first floor, and sometimes up on second floor, I believe. I don't remember exactly. Many evenings I spent here at this library.

Wilson *Do you remember there being a dress code?*

Garber I don't remember specifically a dress code. In those days, we didn't wear blue jeans. That was not a part of our dress. I believe we did start wearing slacks during that time, but we mostly wore skirts. It was, I guess, the thing you did. You didn't think about it.

Wilson *We've heard a lot of people talk about the curfews in the dorms.*

Garber Yes.

Wilson *If you were living off campus, did everything close down at a certain time?*

Garber I just remember my friends, my girlfriends, in dormitories, of course, it was just strictly all girls dorms or boys dorms. I'm sure those are intermingled today. I don't know, but a lot of campuses do that today. They always had curfews when they had to be in, but most of the time I was home. I've always been a morning person and not a night person. I still am that to this day. I can get up at five or six o'clock, do my exercise, all that stuff, and go, go, go, go, and by ten or eleven o'clock, I want to be in bed. I haven't changed.

The other thing that was different then is that it was still a dry state until 1959, okay? I don't know quite how that law became—I know that's when Oklahoma no longer became a dry state, in 1959, so in 1957, all the way through college, you did not see any drinking at all. As a sorority member, we were told not to imbibe. (Laughter) I'm sure that's changed a little bit today. (Laughter) I know people say, "How could you have handled that, Carolyn? My goodness!" because every college, they go dah, dah, dah. I said, "Well, I don't know." That's how we grew up, and there was never any bar. There weren't any bars, and there weren't any places to get alcohol. There weren't any liquor stores, so

that's what you did.

Wilson *So in 1959 do you recall there being much of a change?*

Garber No, not at that time. I think it took time for that all to—then I came back to visit because I have family, of course, that lived here. We'd come back to visit, and my sister said, "Well, we can go out now, Carolyn, and you can bring in your own bottle." I think that's how it was, and you could buy setups at first. Now I noticed that you can walk in and order a cocktail if you so desire. I haven't done that in Stillwater yet, but I did that in Oklahoma City the other night. (Laughter)

Wilson *Were you involved in campus activities or organizations?*

Garber Oh, I was. I loved campus! I did not go through Rush at the beginning of my freshman year. I went through Rush after Rush week. I met a nice girl in my chemistry class, and she happened to be an Alpha Chi Omega. We got to know each other really well, and that's probably how I got invited to become an Alpha Chi Omega. I enjoyed that because it was a way to have social friends, and on a big campus you need some kind of a group, I think, to identify with. That was really good for me. They were a really nice group of girls.

Then I got involved with the Home Economics Club at that time. Also, I was really active in the Lutheran Student Association. Then that led me to the University Religious Council (which I don't even know if that club exists) and various other organizations I belonged to. Then later, I was asked to be a part of Mortar Board, and we rode in a parade on tandem bicycles. I don't know if they still do that anymore, but that was lots of fun. We had our little white blazers on, and we had black shorts. I have a picture of that. That'd probably be an archival picture of riding in the parade and throwing out candy from the tandem bicycles. Oh, yes.

Wilson *Yes, we would love a copy. (Laughter)*

Garber Yes, I do have a copy of that. Someone took a picture. It's your senior year, of course, when we did that. So, yes, activities were very, very important to be in. I think college has a great purpose. It teaches you a discipline, but it also teaches you how to analyze, how to do some critical thinking, how to evaluate, how to put your ideas together. That's one reason college has such an important part for me in my life.

Wilson *What were some activities you would do for fun?*

Garber Well, we had, of course, all these crazy things like hayrides.

Wilson *Who organized the hayrides?*

Garber A sorority or fraternity would organize, or a dormitory. The farmers would come in, and my father used to do that sometimes. You bring the hayrack in, and they put sides on it, and you'd all climb on the hayrack. You'd drive out to a farm someplace, and they do a big wiener roast. That was a big deal. Probably would not be a big deal to kids today, but it was lots of fun. We had dances, and there were a lot of things going on.

Wilson *Where would you hang out on campus or off campus?*

Garber Student Union a lot.

Wilson *What do you remember about the Student Union?*

Garber Just a nice place to go over and take a break. I never drank coffee in those days. That was an adult thing I learned later in life, I guess. In college I didn't drink coffee. I thought it had such a bitter taste. Isn't that crazy? Now I think it's wonderful. Yes, I would say the Student Union was kind of my hangout. Walking around Theta Pond. I'm so glad that that has been kept in its beauty because it's just a gorgeous spot, particularly in the spring and the fall. It was a nice place to go sit and take a break, or sit out in front of the library. We'd go do that and take a break. Then you'd go back in and study.

Wilson *Was there any other wildlife around Theta Pond at the time?*

Garber Just those ducks. They're still there.

Wilson *Well, we've heard a few stories about an alligator that lived in the pond. (Laughter)*

Garber Well, now, I never saw the alligator. (Laughter)

Wilson *Did you ever witness anyone being thrown into Theta Pond?*

Garber Yes, my brother-in-law. They used to do that after people were married, and he had to wheel my sister down in a wheelbarrow, down Main Street in Stillwater. Then they took him to Theta Pond and threw him in. So I witnessed that, but I didn't witness other people being thrown in. Does that happen on a regular basis now?

Wilson *Well, not now, but back then apparently it happened when people were engaged or if they got married or...*

Garber I don't remember any of that. Well, in the sorority you had these pinning things, or when you blow a candle out when you sing the song or whatever. I remember that, but I don't remember anyone being thrown in. Maybe fraternities did that. I don't know.

Wilson *Did you play Bridge?*

Garber I didn't then. I learned that in 1961 when I went to Europe. After I graduated, I went to Europe on a study group for ten weeks, and that's when I learned to play Bridge. A lot of my sorority sisters played Bridge. That was a big thing, and to watch the soap operas. They did that in the afternoon sometimes. I remember those things.

Wilson *Do you remember any particular soap operas?*

Garber No, because I never watched them. I mean, I just remember them talking about whatever happened that day, and they had to see what was going to happen. I don't particularly remember the names, no.

Wilson *When you did live in the sorority, did you eat in the sorority?*

Garber Yes, I did. I think students did a student teaching for nine weeks or ten weeks, something like that. That's when they had vacancies, and so some of us in the local community could move in for that nine weeks to fill in the void. That was really a nice experience for me, yes.

Wilson *Did you ever have to do any time in the Home Management House?*

Garber I did not do that because I had a minor in home economics education, and I would've had to fulfill that at a later time. I didn't do it, also, because I was working and going to school.

Wilson *Where did you work?*

Garber At R. Jay Cleaners, which is long gone by now. It was on Washington Street. That's where I worked. I started there as a junior in high school and worked through my senior year.

Wilson *Of college?*

Garber College, yes. It helped pay the bills because I had to pay for all my own college education.

Wilson *How much would you work in a week? Do you remember?*

Garber Oh, probably twenty hours, twenty-five hours, something like that,

whatever I could work in, in between classes.

Wilson *Did you ever attend any Allied Arts events?*

Garber Yes, those were very important. We got four or five, at that time, free tickets. As a student, you got these tickets to go, and you also got your football tickets. I don't know how that works today, but if you were a full-time student, you were able to go to those things, yes. Any concerts that I could go to when they'd bring in a symphony, or they'd bring in a group to play. I remember seeing a Kingston Trio. One time they came in here, and that was a wonderful, wonderful event. That was in the Field House then, which is now what I believe you call Gallagher-Iba, at that time.

Wilson *What about sporting events? Did you attend many?*

Garber A few. I attended football games. We had to trade because we had to work on Saturdays down there at R. Jay Cleaners. I was the cashier and in charge of the furs my senior year and stuff. So, whenever we could, we tried to switch off between two or three of us so we could attend football games and some basketball games, maybe a few wrestling matches, not too many. Girls' sports were just kind of non-existent in those days. You look through the *Redskin*, and you'll see that. I'm just so glad that things have improved for women. They really have. Now there are sporting teams for you, and we didn't have that.

Wilson *That's a big change.*

Garber Sure.

Wilson *You just mentioned that you were in charge of furs?*

Garber Yes, people would bring their furs to the furrier, and we had cold storage. I had to write up the contract and make sure of everything, and then check it back out to them when they came and picked it up in the fall. They'd bring it in the spring. (Laughter)

Wilson *So you would just house them for the summer?*

Garber Yes, in this cold storage unit. Yes, it was a huge cold storage unit they had at the cleaners. Some people would bring all their winter clothes. We'd clean them and bag them, and then I was just in charge of making sure that they were in the right place and everybody could find them. Hey, it was a job, and it worked.

Wilson *Do you recall how much someone would pay to keep their fur coat over*

the summer? (Laughs)

Garber I don't remember that amount. I just don't remember. At the time, I probably thought it was expensive, but I don't remember.

Wilson *That's interesting.*

Garber I think people sometimes still do that today, but now, with different kinds of homes and everything, people probably don't do that as much.

Wilson *Did you date in college?*

Garber Of course. (Laughter)

Wilson *Where would you go on dates?*

Garber Movies, and then there were always activities. Sororities and fraternities had so many different dances and groups going, and the Student Union would have activities going on. If there was a sporting event, you went to a sporting event. A lot of different organizations had different kinds of activities, so that's what you would do.

Wilson *Would you ever go to any restaurants or soda shops off campus?*

Garber Not so much in those days. I don't remember a gentleman ever—in those days, you always expected the gentleman to ask you out, just going out for dinner. I just don't think you did that.

Wilson *Did you have a car?*

Garber No. My parents had a car, and sometimes I was able to use that, but I did not have a car. Many students did not have cars in those days. There were a few, but I would say that was a rarity rather than commonplace. Some guys had cars. The gentlemen seemed to have cars more than the ladies.

Wilson *Would you ever go out to Yost Lake?*

Garber Yost Lake, yes. Maybe I went out there one time. There was also Boomer Lake at that time, Lake Carl Blackwell, but rare visits to those places.

Wilson *Do you remember emphasis weeks like Religious Emphasis Week or Howdy Week or...*

Garber Well, Homecoming week, that was always a big thing. As my husband

and I parked at the OSU Foundation this morning and were welcomed there, then we walked to campus. As we walked by the Sigma Chis, I believe, (I'm not sure whether that's the right house) they were so busy working. I can remember working midnights, getting floats ready. We did huge floats in those days for the parade. I'll be interested in what they have tomorrow.

Wilson *Are you going?*

Garber Oh, yes! I'm taking in everything I can this weekend. I'm here, and I want to see what it was like. Even though fifty years ago, you don't quite—Homecoming was a huge weekend. We also had various contests on campus. I'm not for sure what they were called, but they had these singing groups that performed, and different groups got together and rehearsed a lot. I remember we sang "Bali Hai." (Laughs) I'm not for sure what that was all about. I believe we had a Religious Week in University Religious Council that I was president of for either one or two years. We brought in various speakers on campus. I think Haile Selassie from Ethiopia came here, and because of my leadership roles I believe I got to shake his hand. That was kind of an important day.

Wilson *Yes, that's pretty neat.*

Garber Well, I learned a lot. I think organizations are very important in a student's life, and getting involved with something gives you leadership responsibilities and your ability to communicate and organize. Of course, I enjoyed that, so it helped me grow and mature as a person.

Wilson *Well, more about Homecoming, was it a whole week of activities besides the pomping and preparing?*

Garber I just remember the preparing because we'd have to take our time slot to work on the float. We didn't have housing decorations so much those days. They did floats. I just remember everybody had to work on it so many hours, putting in the crepe paper and cutting it and all that stuff, and designing it, of course. You were busy.

Wilson *Would you always go to the Homecoming football game?*

Garber Tried to if I didn't have to work, yes. Homecoming was—the parade, I thought, was a wonderful thing. It was always a big thing at OSU campus. It wasn't considered a minor thing. It was a big thing. I think it still must be pretty big.

Wilson *Yes, it is. (Laughter) It's big.*

Garber It's a major event!

Wilson *Yes, for sure. Well, I guess if you started in 1957, the university had just switched names to Oklahoma State?*

Garber Just a few years before that, I believe.

Wilson *Was there still any discussion about that or opinions? Being from Stillwater, did you hear people grumbling or in praise of the name switch?*

Garber I would say that people thought it was a good thing to switch to Oklahoma State University. I didn't ever hear any grumbling about it. I also remember my father bringing us to the Student Union when it was first dedicated. That was some time before that, but when the Student Union had a dedication, we went to it.

Wilson *Do you remember some of the events surrounding that? Was there a ribbon cutting or...*

Garber Yes, yes, the traditional things, but they're not specific in my mind. It was the reception, and it was all very nice, the band playing and so forth. The band has always been an important part. I've always liked music, so that's been an important part of my life. In my professional life, too, music has been very important. I played in the high school band, not in the college band.

Wilson *What did you play?*

Garber French horn.

Wilson *What about the Pistol Pete mascot?*

Garber Oh, yes, he was around then. (Laughs) It's okay. He was certainly around. It was nothing major in my life, but it was okay. (Laughs) It's good to have those things.

Wilson *Do you remember any big issues that students were talking about on campus at the time?*

Garber No, I don't remember anything big that would cause a big controversy at the time. I think they had a panty raid once in a girls' dormitory. That was probably one of the things most talked about. (Laughs) But, no, I don't. Elections were talked about. We had mock presidential elections. There was always some political discussion, but I don't remember any controversial issue.

- Wilson** *Well, is there one place on campus that is very special to you?*
- Garber** Well, I would say the library and the Student Union still hold really special spots for me. Of course, I spent time at the sorority house. That's changed, too. I walked by that house today, and I think it's now the Phi Delta Theta house. Those things, but I would say the Union and the library still hold really special in my heart. Classroom Building, that's a classroom, so those don't hold too many special spots. The food nutrition building, I spent so much time there my senior year, it was like I lived there. (Laughter)
- Wilson** *What are some of your favorite memories from your time at OSU?*
- Garber** Being accepted for who you were and what you did was so much different than high school, and I really appreciated that at OSU. In high school, it's very cliquish. If you were not from a wealthy family in high school, you were considered like a nobody. I came to college, and that was just a totally different picture. You were accepted for what you could do in the classroom, for who you could be, and for who you were. It had nothing to do with your income. It had nothing to do with the car you drove. It was such an accepting environment that that's what stimulated me to excel. I'm very thankful for that. I did not feel I was judged based on those things that I consider to be very small in life, so I would say that was what I really enjoyed at OSU, and it encouraged me to go on.
- There wasn't a professor I didn't have that didn't encourage you to achieve your highest potential and who you were. I taught for twenty-seven years, worked as a dietician for many years, and one thing I've always tried to emphasize to the young is that thinking and studying, it makes it worth it. Even at the time that you don't think it's so important, it really is important.
- Wilson** *OSU obviously had a big impact on your life and opening up your future and allowing you to grow.*
- Garber** Oh, absolutely. Oh, yes. I wouldn't be able to have done the things I've done without having been able to go to school, and I really appreciate that. I think OSU also makes the community of Stillwater a better place. Culturally, intellectually, environmentally, there's just so many things that OSU adds to this community of Stillwater, Oklahoma. It would be a lost little community without OSU.
- Wilson** *What is it about Oklahoma State that sparks loyalty in students and alumni?*

- Garber** Well, I think when you've gone to a school that you really liked, you always have an attached loyalty to it. It's hard to take that away. I really have a difficult time—even though OU is a nice place and if they win in football, that's not a big deal to me, but I still am pretty loyal to OSU just because it was the place that I went to school, and I have a loyalty to it. They treated me right, I learned a lot, and I think I'm a better person because I went to Oklahoma State.
- Wilson** *Well, you said you went to Europe after you graduated.*
- Garber** I did.
- Wilson** *Where did you go in Europe?*
- Garber** Well, in 1961, the Lutheran Church, National Lutheran Council, they posted this little sign at the Lutheran Student Association over at Salem Lutheran and said, "Apply to go to study abroad." I thought, "Oh, that's what I want to do. I want to go someplace." So I applied, and luckily I was one chosen. They chose fifteen of us from across the United States. We met in New York. We didn't know each other at all. We were from all parts of the United States. We studied in Sweden, Denmark, and Germany in a ten-week wonderful, wonderful experience. In fact, that group still gets together. There are thirteen living out of the fifteen, and we just met together in July, eight of us. And we're still studying. We still review books. It was a marvelous experience and such a great group of inquisitive minds, eight gentlemen and seven ladies. It was wonderful.
- Wilson** *What were you called?*
- Garber** It was called the European Study Project.
- Wilson** *And did they do that in other years?*
- Garber** No, I don't think they have. We discussed that at our last group. In fact, I'm writing up an article now, talking about (that was our fiftieth reunion) how important that was to us and what it did for us and why these kind of things still need to be done today, and that it did have a great purpose, and it was worth the [cost]. We did have to pay a little bit of money, but a lot of it was mostly scholarships that we got. That was a big help to most of us in those days, to be able to go.
- Wilson** *So was just having the international experience part of what was so important, just experiencing another way of life?*
- Garber** Yes, I mean, almost all of us had never been to Europe. We had teachers

from throughout the world coming and giving these seminars and these lectures. Then we'd tour these certain areas, and the lecture would emphasize wherever we were going to tour. Then we'd come back and discuss it and the relevancy of that. So, yes, it was an enlightening experience and also opened you up to the fact that people across the world are just—the diversity of people, learning to accept people at all levels. Learning to engage in other discussions is just something I always recommend to students. If you can study abroad for a semester, do it.

Wilson *I feel like there's a bigger push now for that, but there are still a lot of people that wonder why they should take the time to do something like this. They aren't sure they understand the implications, so it's great to hear you say what an impact that's had.*

Garber It's very positive, and I've always encouraged people to do that. It's an eye-opener. If you just stay in a small area your whole life, you don't get exposed to other people and other languages and finding out that there are many different people that make the world go around. We need more of that to achieve a peaceful nation.

Wilson *Definitely.*

Garber And accepting of others, so important.

Wilson *So when you returned from that, what did you do?*

Garber I started a dietetic internship at University of Chicago, and there was another girl from Oklahoma State University at that time. I was hoping she'd be able to come to this reunion because we've kept up with each other throughout these years. She lives in Tucson, Arizona, now, but she couldn't. It was an internship for a year, and then you took an exam, and then you became a dietician. I worked for a year as a dietician, and then I went to Michigan State on a fellowship to get my master's in nutrition. That's where I met my husband, so that's changed my life.

Wilson *And you currently live in...*

Garber In South Bend, Indiana.

Wilson *Have you been there since then?*

Garber Since 1967 in South Bend, yes. We both are now retired, so we travel a lot and so forth.

Wilson *So have you been back to OSU many times since 1961?*

- Garber** I have been back to Stillwater, and I have walked on the campus several times, but I haven't been here during Homecoming since I left. During the year when you're a schoolteacher or you're working, (and my husband was teaching, also) you can't always get back here during these kind of weekends, so this is my first time to be back to Homecoming since fall of 1960.
- Wilson** *It's going to be fun! (Laughter) I'm sure you've noticed a few changes around campus, probably, since the last time you were here.*
- Garber** Yes, yes, yes, oh, yes. I'm looking forward to the golf cart tour because that should be good, too.
- Wilson** *Well, do you have any advice to give to OSU students today or students thinking about attending OSU?*
- Garber** Well, follow your passion. We have a wonderful daughter that excelled in school. When she was ready to choose a college and ready to choose a major, my advice to her was to follow your passion. Major in what you like best, and things will work out. So she has two degrees: (I'm diverting here just to tell you why it's important to follow your passion) a degree in English and a degree in cello performance. Now she's actually in the IT world, but it's because of her English skills and all her music theory that she's able to do that. She's a very happy person. She still does music on the side.
- I think if you're just going for a job because you think it pays well or it's popular, you have to really follow what you want to do. If you want to be an engineer or something like this, OSU has an excellent School of Engineering. There are, of course, different areas that schools excel in, but I think a basic bachelor's degree that allows you to critically analyze, think, write, learning to write—I know people use computers today, but you've still got to be able to write. I would say that it's a good place, and you will get a good education, but you also have to put yourself into it. People don't give you something. You have to get yourself totally involved, and don't be afraid to raise your hand and say, "I will do that."
- Wilson** *That's great advice.*
- Garber** So that's my advice to any student thinking about college. You may not know what you want to major in your freshman year. Maybe you'll just be taking basic courses. I mean, some students do that. I was just one of those ones that knew. I think I was too straightforward, and I should've diversified a little bit, but that's what happened.

Wilson *And you would encourage students to pursue an international experience, if possible?*

Garber I would say if you can study a term abroad, don't be afraid to go. Do it. Absolutely. I think those programs open up a whole new avenue for people. If you want to broaden your horizons and make this world a better place, I think they really are there to help. I know OSU has some wonderful programs.

Wilson *Well, is there anything that we haven't covered that you'd like to talk about?*

Garber No. I appreciate you very much, Latasha. What is your major by the way?

Wilson *I got my master's in international studies.*

Garber Okay, good for you! So you have been abroad, I take it?

Wilson *I have.*

Garber And would you agree with me?

Wilson *I would, very much. Yes, I think it does benefit every student that can have that experience, so hopefully we can get more people doing that.*

Garber Yes. My husband and I were fortunate that in 1985 to '87, we lived in Malaysia, and one of the best experiences in our lives. He was associated with the university there, and I worked as a counselor on the campus. That was a second thought. I mean, I didn't go there with a job. When I got there, then they found this job. Our daughter got to go to an international school. That was such an eye-opening experience to be engaged in another country and live there and follow their routine. You can't walk in there thinking that you're in the United States. You have to learn how, as you know, to respect the country in which you live and to follow their rules and to adjust accordingly. It was an amazing, wonderful experience. I would advise anyone that can, do that. If you can live abroad for a year, do it.

Wilson *Well, thank you very much for visiting with me today.*

Garber Thank you, thank you.

----- *End of interview* -----