**Oral History Interview**

**with**

**Ethel Bohannan and Ruth Hensley**

Interview Conducted by

Tanya Finchum

August 4, 2016

Spotlighting Oklahoma

Oral History Project

**Oklahoma Oral History Research Program**

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**Interview History**

Interviewer: Tanya Finchum

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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 the *Spotlighting Oklahoma Oral History Project* is to document the development of the state by recording its cultural and intellectual history.

This project was approved by the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board on April 15, 2009.

**Legal Status**

Scholarly use of the recordings and transcripts of the interview with Ethel Bohannan and Ruth Hensley are unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed on August 4, 2016.

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**About Ruth Hensley and Ethel Bohannan…**

Ruth Hensley and Ethel Bohannan met while working at the Glass House Restaurant near the Vinita, Oklahoma, exit on the Will Rogers Turnpike and have remained friends ever since. Ruth Hensley was born in 1922 in Welch, Oklahoma, and her family lived on a farm. Ruth recalls riding a horse to school until part way through the eleventh grade when school busses entered the picture. After graduating from high school in 1940, Ruth began working as a waitress and around 1960 she hired to work at the Glass House Restaurant. She worked there for about ten years at which time she relocated to Tulsa and started a twenty-five year waitressing career with Phoenicia’s, a steakhouse in Tulsa.

Ethel Bohannan was born in Bonner Springs, Kansas, in 1937 and her family later moved to Easton, Kansas, where she graduated from high school in 1954. Ethel soon married and while her husband was serving in the military they lived in several locations. In January of 1969 she moved to Vinita, Oklahoma, and a month later Ethel began working for Annabell Southern at the Glass House Restaurant. Her initial pay was fifty-two cents an hour plus tips. Ethel worked in the Broiler Room for about seven years before leaving the Glass House for other employment. While Ethel and Ruth worked together for a time they also have another thing in common. When Ruth moved to Tulsa, Ethel purchased Ruth’s home and continues to call it home.

**About the Glass House…**

At the half-way point on the Will Rogers Turnpike near Vinita, Oklahoma, stands an iconic landmark. The arched building opened in 1957 and was the first restaurant built over a U.S. public highway. Conoco (Continental Oil Company) commissioned the building with an aim to serve the needs of motorists passing in both directions. The building housed the Glass House Restaurant, dedicated in 1958, and included a cafeteria, snack bar, and sit-down restaurant. On each side of the building, motorists enjoyed full-service gas stations, operated by Conoco initially. Over the years other restaurants and fuel facilities have operated at the service plaza. Host International, Interstate Hosts and Howard Johnson’s have operated the plaza at different times. The Glass House and the Conoco stations employed many of the area’s youth through the years and served many, many travelers. Renovation began on the service plaza in 2012 and in 2014 it re-opened with a new name, the Will Rogers Archway.

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| **Ethel Bohannan  & Ruth Hensley**  Oral History Interview  Interviewed by Tanya Finchum  August 4, 2016  Vinita, Oklahoma |  |

**Finchum** *Today is August 4, 2016. My name is Tanya Finchum. I’m with Oklahoma State University. Today I am in Vinita, Oklahoma, to speak with Ethel Bohannan and Ruth Hensley. This is part of our Glass House Project for Vinita’s Glass House over on the turnpike. Thank you for coming today. I’ve got to get it right, Ruth and Ethel. Okay, let’s start with when and where were you born?*

**Hensley** I guess you’d say I was born at Welch, Oklahoma, but I was out in the country. (Laughs)

**Finchum** *And what year?*

**Hensley** What year was I born?

**Bohannan** Figure back ninety-four.

**Finchum** *If you’re ninety-four, so what month?*

**Hensley** This month.

**Bohannan** September.

**Finchum** *In September?*

**Bohannan** No, no, August.

**Finchum** *August.*

**Hensley** August the 16.

**Finchum** *In 1912?*

**Hensley** Twenty-two. (Laughter)

**Finchum** *I was wrong. That’s Ruth, right? Okay, and how about you Ethel?*

**Bohannan** I was born in Bonner Springs, Kansas, the 21st of March, 1937.

**Finchum** *So just a little bit after you, not much.*

**Bohannan** Just a little bit. (Laughs)

**Finchum** *Have you always lived around this area, Ruth?*

**Hensley** Well, I started in Welch and then we lived at Afton [Oklahoma], and back to Welch, then to Vinita, and then at Tulsa, and now at Claremore.

**Finchum** *So mostly Northeast Oklahoma.*

**Hensley** Yes.

**Finchum** *And how about you?*

**Bohannan** I come here in January of ’69 to Oklahoma. Prior to that I was military. I was married to the military, and I was in Germany and around.

**Finchum** *You served in the military or just married into it?*

**Bohannan** No, my husband did. Married into it.

**Finchum** *So you came to Vinita in ’69?*

**Bohannan** January of ’69.

**Finchum** *And been here pretty much ever since?*

**Bohannan** Yes.

**Finchum** *So you consider it home?*

**Bohannan** Yes, ma’am.

**Hensley** She bought my house!

**Bohannan** I bought her house.

**Hensley** When I moved to Tulsa. (Laughs)

**Bohannan** I love it.

**Finchum** *Has she changed it much?*

**Hensley** Well, no I haven’t been there.

**Bohannan** I’ve got five families of furniture in it, if that tells you anything. Wall to wall, ducks, deers, bears, pillows.

**Hensley** My husband and my dad built—we bought two rooms off of an old house and they built that house from there.

**Bohannan** Her husband did.

**Finchum** *And did it have electricity from the get go?*

**Hensley** Yeah, it had everything when we got done with it.

**Bohannan** Not when they started, but when they got done with it, it did.

**Finchum** *If you grew up out in the country? You grew up out in the country?*

**Hensley** Did I work? Oh yeah, I’m a farmer.

**Finchum** *I was going to say, lived on a farm?*

**Hensley** Yeah.

**Bohannan** I did too.

**Finchum** *Both of you?*

**Bohannan** Until I was eighteen.

**Finchum** *Have certain chores you didn’t like?*

**Hensley** Well, my dad said, “Do this.” And we didn’t question it either. We didn’t argue like kids do now days. Dad said, “Do it,” we done it.

**Bohannan** You betcha.

**Hensley** It was my job to bring the cows in to milk. My sister’s job was to pick up the eggs out of the hen house. I had to ride my horse. Now I rode a horse to school until I was halfway through my eleventh grade and we got a school bus.

**Finchum** *I bet that disappointed the horse.*

**Hensley** (Laughs) No, I don’t imagine it did because he had to stand in the barn all day. I get to thinking about that poor horse and I think, “I don’t even know where he had a drink of water or not.” (Laughs)

**Finchum** *Did he have a name?*

**Hensley** Yeah, he had a name, but I don’t remember what…Jerry was my mean horse. He would try to rake you off with a tree limb if he could. My dad got a horse from our doctor in town for me to ride to high school. It was a white horse. I forget what its name was.

**Finchum** *You had one sister?*

**Hensley** Until I was thirteen years old. My dad remarried and I had another sister.

**Finchum** *Three girls.*

**Hensley** And both of them are dead and I’m still alive.

**Finchum** *What do you think the secret it? Your secret then?*

**Hensley** I guess live the best you can, don’t drink, and don’t smoke.

**Finchum** *And maybe be a little ornery?*

**Hensley** Well, everybody claims I am. Not me. (Laughter) Not me.

**Bohannan** That’s what keeps you going is your orneriness.

**Finchum** *How about you, Ethel? Do you have brothers and sisters?*

**Bohannan** I had one sister and she’s gone. My folks are gone. But I was—when I was a kid I was the boy my daddy didn’t have. I worked in the fields with him. I helped my mom. We had a grade A dairy barn. My mom—there was thirty-five to forty head of cattle, night and morning, milked them.

**Finchum** *By hand?*

**Bohannan** Yes—well, at last she had milkers. She just cried, and cried, and cried when she got those milkers, because they was mean to the cows.

**Hensley** I had to plow corn with horses and we had eighty acres of corn to plow. My dad would help with the threshing crew. When he went to help with the threshing crew, I had to go out and plow the corn. I had to lay it by.

**Finchum** *Just different days wasn’t it? What would you do for fun if you did all that work?*

**Hensley** Me and my sister used to play hopscotch. (Laughs)

**Finchum** *That counts.*

**Hensley** And jump rope, that’s what we did.

**Finchum** *How about you, Ethel?*

**Bohannan** I didn’t do a lot. Played with my dolls when I had time. My daddy done the farm on shares with a man from Kansas City, and he had a clothing store, Ohrbach’s Clothing in Kansas City. He’d come every month, see how Daddy was doing, if Daddy needed anything, but he always brought my mother, every month, he’d bring my mother 500 dollars, besides what they made, and he’d bring me a hundred. Mom and Dad put it back for me to save for when I graduated from high school.

He’s the one that gave me my horse that I rode and went after the cattle, only I took a rifle with me when I went because I went down—that’s when they lived at Leavenworth [Kansas]. We moved from Bonner Springs when I was three to twelve miles south and west of Leavenworth. You know all those bad prisons are in Leavenworth. One time, I never will forget—and I had a cattle dog. He went with me, he never got away from me. I went after to get the cows. I was minus one. So the others was brought to the house. I went back, Ted went with me, and I went back and found two guys, had butchered one hanging from the tree. I said—I pulled my rifle and I said, “I don’t think you’re going to finish that.” “Oh yes we are.” One guy got up and he said, “I’m not going to let no smart kid tell me what to do.” I was about twelve. He started for me and my horse reared up and brought him down. He laid there because that horse put his hooves right down on him. He laid there. The other guy said, “Well.” I said to Teddy, “Go get Daddy.”

Well, when Daddy come back the sheriff was with them because there were two, three escaped convicts and that’s who was there. They had stole the truck and they had just butchered the cow. So Daddy made them drop it. Sheriff took them in and come back later and got the truck. He said, “I can’t believe a twelve-year-old kid captured them.” I said “No, my horse did and my rifle.” Because I would’ve shot them, because my Daddy trained me to. If you need to protect yourself, you shoot them. I never will forget that. I never will forget that. I was real scared, but I knew Tony would protect me. My horse was Tony and I knew he’d protect me. After he brought that one guy down there the others didn’t think they wanted to be brought down like that so they didn’t. That was the only thing I experienced the whole time when I was a kid bringing in the cattle.

**Finchum** *Tony deserved a steak that night.*

**Bohannan** Yeah, Tony…

**Finchum**  *(Laughs) Or extra oats.*

**Bohannan** …extra oats, yeah, he got it!

**Hensley** Me and my sister used to dig a can of worms and go fishing every day in the summertime, and we went swimming in the creek. (Laughs)

**Finchum** *Okay.*

**Bohannan** She still likes to fish and grow flowers.

**Finchum** *Getting worms is not fun, though, is it?*

**Hensley** Well, it didn’t take long. We’d just get a shovel and go out there underneath trees and dig, and get a half a can of worms and away we’d go fishing! We’d catch little perch and bring them home. Grandma would clean them and cook them for us. (Laughs)

**Finchum** *Sounds good too now, doesn’t it?*

**Bohannan** We grew our own vegetables. We had our own meat. I can remember when my mom went to the store, she had food stamps. You could only get so much coffee, you could only get so many pairs of shoes, and stuff like that—sugar. I can remember that.

**Finchum** *Was that during the Depression and rations?*

**Bohannan** Yes, and I can remember we used to get butter. It was white and it had a yellow capsule in it and you broke it, and stirred it up, and it made it yellow.

**Finchum** *Didn’t change the flavor, just the color?*

**Bohannan** Just the color. I used to shake—make buttermilk and make butter, shake it. Mother had a deal that you turned the handle and then we had one you jumped up and down like that, plunged up and down. Most of the time I’d shake it in a quart jar. Daddy loved that milk. It was buttermilk. Put a little vinegar in it after you got your butter out and it was buttermilk. He loved that.

**Finchum** *Pretty much good for us too back in those days. You worked it off. Well where did you graduate from high school?*

**Bohannan** We moved from Leavenworth to Easton, which was eight miles north. I graduated from Easton High School. Four in my graduation class, two boys and two girls.

**Finchum**  *And what year?*

**Bohannan** Fifty-four, no…

**Finchum** *Don’t feel bad. She’s having to think too.*

**Bohannan** I was in school eleven years because I took the first and second grade at the same time.

**Hensley** I can remember when I graduated real easy. It was 1940.

**Bohannan** I graduated in ’54.

**Finchum** *After you graduated from high school, what did you do?*

**Hensley** My aunt come and got me and took me to Vinita. I lived with her for a while and then I started working for people and working in restaurants. Next thing you know I got hooked on restaurants. (Laughs)

**Finchum** *And where along those lines did you get hooked on the Glass House?*

**Hensley** When my daughter went to college I had to go work to help her pay for it. She left the Glass House and went to Tulsa to go to college, and I went to Glass House and went to work.

**Finchum** *To pay for her to go to…*

**Bohannan** That was about ’61 or ’62 I think, her son told me a minute ago.

**Finchum** *Okay, that hadn’t been open that long because it opened in ’58, ’59? Something like that.*

**Bohannan** I think it was ’57, but I’m not sure.

**Finchum** *Something like that, in the late ’50s then. So were you a waitress or a cook?*

**Hensley** I was a waitress. Annabell got the big idea that I was so good at waiting on big tables of people that she would give them all to me. I said, “Oh no you’re not. I’ll take my share, but that’s it!” (Laughs) Because you make just as much money off of two people as you could eight.

**Bohannan** I can remember Annabell used to have all these women who wanted to play Bridge and all this and sit and drink coffee, and she’d put them in the rooms where we had banquets. Well, they decided they had to have a little nip so Ruth, or Darlene, or I, had to work them because we had to be of age. They’d pull one of us off to work that. They never give us a tip. We went to Annabell and told her “Hey, we’re not waiting on those people.” “Why not?” “Because they don’t give us a tip. You took our tips away from us, took us off the floor.” So she made them start giving us a tip. They thought we was just out there for I guess our health. We worked in the Broiler Room and we made good tips. We made good tips.

**Finchum** *That was mostly in the afternoon or was it lunch and dinner?*

**Bohannan** We worked two to ten.

**Finchum** *Okay, so the evening shift.*

**Bohannan** But I have worked breakfast and all, but we worked two to ten.

**Finchum** *What was considered a good tip?*

**Bohannan** Oh, ten, fifteen dollars.

**Finchum** *For a table of…*

**Bohannan** Two. Fours should be more.

**Hensley** I made 200 dollar tips. That was very rare. It just happened to be people that liked me real good. (Laughs)

**Bohannan** If we didn’t make over a hundred dollars at night we thought we were not making anything.

**Finchum** *Did you get paid per hour and plus tips?*

**Bohannan** Yeah, when I started I got fifty-two cents an hour.

**Finchum** *How about you? About the same?*

**Hensley** I don’t remember.

**Bohannan** When I quit…

**Hensley** You never even questioned it, you just went to work.

**Bohannan** Yeah, it was about fifty-two cents when I started. I started in February of ’69. I made fifty-two cents. When I quit in…I worked almost seven years and then we had to start going down to Annabell and turning in our tips at night time and pay taxes on them. We said, “No.” So that’s when I quit and I had a chance to go to days. I could work while my boys were in school, so I quit.

**Finchum** *So you were there about seven years?*

**Bohannan** Yes.

**Finchum** *And about how long were you there?*

**Hensley** Oh, I’d have to think about that.

**Bohannan** She started about ’61, ’62, she was still there when…

**Hensley** Oh, probably maybe four or five years because I moved to Tulsa.

**Bohannan** Yeah, but she moved to Tulsa after I went to work. She started ’60, ’61, say she started in ’60, she probably went to—because I worked ’60 to ’68? ’67? Anyway, she went to Tulsa about a year before I quit working out there.

**Finchum** *Over ten years then.*

**Bohannan** Yeah, she worked a long time. We had another girl, another lady that worked with us, I don’t know if they got ahold of her or not. She was Darlene Booth. She was a tall, dark-headed…she lives in Sand Springs, but I imagine her health is pretty bad, because I talked to her about this and I never got no answer. I sent a letter and I never got no answer. She worked with us, and then we had a little redhead, Sarah Crumb, that worked with us.

**Hensley** Annabell called me one time after I moved to Tulsa, wanted me to come back and work a First National Bank party. I said, “You want me to come back to the Glass House and work a party?” “Yes.” So I went up there and worked it. (Laughs)

**Bohannan** Her and I worked it.

**Finchum** *Well would you have to wear different uniforms for the night? For something like that? A special event?*

**Hensley** We had different uniforms. The ugliest one was that yellow one.

**Bohannan** That yellow thing, because you sat down and it was all wrinkled. They were hot.

**Hensley** Didn’t we have a green checkered one?

**Bohannan** No.

**Hensley** No?

**Bohannan** No. We had those white things, those…

**Hensley** I never had a white one.

**Bohannan** Well I did and then we had those yellow things. Remember we’d carry them to work and dress when we got to work, because we didn’t want no wrinkles in the back from sitting down, because they’d just wrinkle like you wouldn’t believe. And a white apron, and a white bow in the hair, but I could never keep the bow in my hair. We couldn’t have our hair below our shoulders. We had to wear hairnets.

**Finchum** *Had to be short or just pulled back up?*

**Bohannan** It had to be short, never touch your collar.

**Finchum** *She’d inspect? Annabell would inspect you when you came through the door?*

**Bohannan** No, Mrs. Kellow would. She was the main lady. She was from Kentucky and she’d come through. And we was supposed to wear girdles.

**Finchum** *That’s even hot—that’s too hot.*

**Bohannan** Tell me about it. And she’d go up—she wouldn’t say, “Do you have a girdle on?” She’d just go up and flip you to see if you had a girdle on. I told her, “Don’t you ever flip me. Don’t you ever flip me.” She never did. She never asked me if I had a girdle on either. I can remember she flipped Sarah, one of the other girls that worked with us, and then we had a couple other girls that worked. Do you remember Frieda and Nancy Kirby that lived over at Eucha?

**Hensley** I don’t think so.

**Bohannan** Well, they worked with us and they were not real swifty. She flipped them when she’d come. When she came one time to teach us table service she said, “I will tell you one time, one time only.”

**Hensley** I never had any of them women talk to me.

**Bohannan** Mrs. Kellow talked to us, Mrs. Kellow talked to us. I remember that.

**Finchum** *Had you worked as a waitress before going to work there? Was that your first waitressing job?*

**Hensley** Oh lands, no.

**Finchum** *You had had others.*

**Hensley** I used to work at the Hotel Vinita. And I worked at Jim’s, which was a restaurant at the south end of town. It was a steakhouse. I worked there in the summertime and I worked at the hotel in the wintertime.

**Finchum** *Did you have to or you just chose to?*

**Hensley** I chose to.

**Bohannan** She was by herself a lot. Her husband was real…

**Hensley** No, every time I’d quit working some place somebody in another restaurant would come after me to go to work. So I generally went. I quit Scotty, phew!

**Bohannan** Yeah, Scotty’s was east of town just as you go out of town. Now there’s several buildings along the east side and several on this side. There’s a pizza place at the very beginning and Scotty’s was there. She worked there and then he went out here and I think she went with him out there, but I’m not sure.

**Hensley** I’d a come home the first day if I had my own car. He would come to Vinita and pick up the waitresses or the people that worked out there and take them out about four miles out of town to his restaurant to work. The first day I went to work the kitchen was full of dirty dishes. I thought, “Boy, if I had my car I’d just turn around and go home.” (Laughs)

**Bohannan** Wasn’t clean.

**Finchum** *What kind a restaurant was it? Scotty’s?*

**Hensley** It was a drive-in restaurant on the highway.

**Finchum** *Hamburgers mostly?*

**Bohannan** He never had meals, just sandwiches, soup.

**Hensley** I never worked so hard in all my life. My feet would hurt clear to my knees. (Laughs)

**Bohannan** She told me that, she’s told me that a lot.

**Hensley** So I’d quit and then Jim would come and get me and make me go to work again.

**Finchum** *What did your husband do for work?*

**Hensley** He worked for the railroad, Fresco.

**Finchum** *So he was gone a lot?*

**Hensley** Yes, he was gone a lot. He would work from Tulsa to Springfield, Missouri, all up and down the…well, they lived in a boxcar wherever they was working. So he was gone all week.

**Finchum** *Was he an engineer?*

**Hensley** No. They was called a bridge and builders.

**Finchum** *I don’t know what that would be.*

**Hensley** Well, build bridges or build buildings.

**Finchum** *With the railroad?*

**Bohannan** They would build a building to put the engines in to repair them.

**Finchum** *That makes sense. I had to learn what a roundhouse was. I guess that’s a railroad term too, isn’t it?*

**Hensley** Yeah, where they turn the trains around. They don’t do that anymore.

**Bohannan** Used to be one in Afton, which is fifteen miles east of here where my husband was born and raised. He can remember the roundhouses. His uncles worked there.

**Finchum** *Neat. So the reason you quit working for Annabell was what?*

**Hensley** I moved to Tulsa, went to work down at—she said, “Why don’t’ you go down to Phoenicia’s and go to work?” So I went down there, asked him for a job, and he said “Well, I can put you to work part time.” I worked about two weeks and one of the girls quit, and I worked there for twenty-five years.

**Bohannan** She retired from Phoenicia’s.

**Finchum** *Which is what?*

**Bohannan** A restaurant in Tulsa, it’s considered a nice one in Tulsa.

**Finchum** *So you moved and [Ethel] bought the house.*

**Bohannan** I bought the house.

**Finchum** *Were you a waitress there or a hostess? What did you do there?*

**Hensley** I waited on people.

**Finchum** *Made better tips than out at the Glass House?*

**Hensley** You don’t want to be a hostess. (Laughs) You don’t make no money.

**Finchum** *Have any particular customer you remember the most?*

**Hensley** I had two or three that I remember the most, yes. They gave me better tips.

**Bohannan** I had one guy come in. He was dressed immaculate. You could eat off of his shoes. We was noted for filet mignon and mile-high lemon chiffon pie…

**Hensley** I had this one group of people and so Don was asking them—that was my boss, was Don. He said, “Is there a waitress you’d rather have?” He said, “Well, I would rather have Shirley,” but he meant me. I said, “Oh Lord, yes. Give him to Shirley.” (Laughs) He didn’t tip.

**Bohannan** Anyway, this guy ordered that and he left me a quarter tip. Her son can tell you this. I took it, he was going down the elevator, and I punched the elevator for it to come back up. He looked at me and he didn’t know what to think. I said, “Here’s your quarter. You probably need it worse than I do.” Well, her son, Tommy, followed him downstairs. He come back with twenty-five dollars for me. He said, “Don’t you set your foot in that Broiler Room again unless you want to tip them girls. They’re not working for their health.” So he asked for me when he come back and he gave me another twenty-five dollars.

**Finchum** *People can be mean, can’t they?*

**Bohannan** Oh, I thought the way he was dressed and to order what he ordered and then gives you a quarter tip. I thought, “That sorry dude.” (Laughs)

**Finchum** *It’s a wonder you didn’t throw it at him.*

**Bohannan** I told him, I said, “Here’s your quarter. You probably need it more than I do.” I remember doing that. Tommy, here comes Tommy to see if I needed any help. (Laughs)

**Finchum** *Would he have reported that to Annabell and got you in trouble?*

**Bohannan** I don’t think Tommy would have, no. It’s her son Tommy, that brought her up today. He’s out in the…

**Finchum** *The customer.*

**Bohannan** No, he left. No, he wouldn’t have reported that because he knew better because he ate the most expensive thing. He knew better. We had some guys at the Conoco Station, there was a Conoco Station on each side of the Glass House. We had a couple guys come up, sit in a booth, and drink coffee. They wasn’t supposed to come to the Broiler Room, they was supposed to go to the snack bar. We had this one guy, he thought the was just real smart. I was doing breakfast that day, of course I’d done all of it, and I was doing breakfast that day and I had two trays. He reached out and flipped me. So when I cleaned my tables off I had juice, and I had syrup, and I had eggs, and when I got to that booth I stubbed my toe. He got every bit of it. He told Annabell. That put a stop to him coming up and drinking coffee in the Broiler Room.

**Finchum** *He didn’t think about it, he started it all.*

**Bohannan** He started it. I told her and she knew him. She knew that I wasn’t fibbing. I just accidently stubbed my toe, couldn’t help it. That’s why I’m not ornery.

**Hensley** Is that enough of this story?

**Finchum** *No.*

**Hensley** No? (Laughs)

**Finchum** *No. Would they have holiday parties? Would Annabell…*

**Bohannan** Oh yeah, we had Christmas parties and every one of our kids would get a Christmas present. We’d get a little bonus for Christmas. I remember one year one of my sons he wanted a boy baby doll and a doll buggy, but he wanted a colored baby. You couldn’t find none here. So Mrs. Kellow said, “I’ll get him one.” So one day before Christmas here she comes, a colored baby doll for him and the doll buggy too. Had it at our Christmas party. He was thrilled to death.

**Hensley** Can I sit in that chair?

**Bohannan** Yes, you can.

**Finchum** *Sure!*

**Hensley** I’m getting tired of sitting in this one.

**Finchum** *Sure, we can switch. No problem.*

**Hensley** It was getting harder and harder. Thank you.

**Finchum** *You’re welcome. I did that so we can get both in the frame. And you two have been friends since that time?*

**Bohannan** Ever since then, ever since then we’ve been friends.

**Finchum** *Have you been back to it since they’ve remodeled?*

**Bohannan** She’s never come back to the house since I’ve lived in it, and I’ve lived in it since April of ’67.

**Hensley** I’ve drove by it. (Laughs)

**Bohannan** A couple of times. Yeah, Tommy will have to bring you up one of these days.

**Finchum** *Have you been back to the Glass House Restaurant since they’ve redid it?*

**Hensley** Well, I went there after they remodeled it. Somebody said I was in a bunch of pictures that was up there on the photo deal of the old—but it wasn’t me, because we never had a uniform that looked that good. (Laughs)

**Bohannan** Do you know who it was?

**Hensley** No. It kind of looks like me but it’s not me, because we never had a uniform that looked that good.

**Bohannan** We never had uniforms that looked good, I didn’t think so.

**Finchum** *Would you have to laundry them yourself? The uniforms?*

**Hensley** Yes.

**Bohannan** Because if you didn’t—Annabell tried sending them out for us, and we’d get them back with this stain on them and that stain on them. We said, “No.”

**Hensley** Yeah, you could pay if you wanted them done.

**Bohannan** Don’t you remember they’d come back with stains on them and everything? We didn’t want that, we just done our own.

**Finchum** *Did you have to cook, do any cooking?*

**Bohannan** No. No cooking.

**Hensley** No. We done everything else. (Laughs)

**Finchum** *What was the favorite thing that they fixed there that you liked?*

**Bohannan** We wasn’t allowed to eat like the filets, and the lobster tails, and all that. We could have any and all the vegetables we wanted and we could have a steak, but we wasn’t allowed to have the pie or the filet mignons.

**Finchum** *You couldn’t have dessert?*

**Bohannan** We could have dessert. We could have ice cream, but we couldn’t have the…

**Hensley** Boy, they had a hot fudge sundae.

**Bohannan** Oh, that was good.

**Hensley** That was the best thing they had. (Laughs)

**Bohannan** Breakfast time they’d take cantaloupes, like this time of the year, clean them, cut them in half, and fill them with vanilla ice cream.

**Finchum** *Sounds good too.*

**Bohannan** But the menu stayed basically the same all the time. We had favorite cooks, or I did.

**Finchum** *Were the customers usually regulars or were they just mostly travelers?*

**Bohannan** Highway people. I remember one time I went and waited on this lady and she turned out to be the lady who taught me typing in high school. Her last name was Farr, F-A-R-R.

**Hensley** I think that people were just excited about eating up over the highway.

**Bohannan** Because you’d sit up there and eat and the cars would whoopy-dooey underneath you and go on.

**Finchum** *Did it get hot with all that glass? When the sun was shining?*

**Bohannan** Didn’t seem like it. Everybody wanted a window table. We had a good hostess and we never sat anybody at a dirty table.

**Hensley** They all wanted a table by the window.

**Bohannan** Where they could see out.

**Finchum** *Would interesting cars go by?*

**Bohannan** Once in a while.

**Finchum** *And tour buses?*

**Bohannan** The tour buses usually went to the snack bar. They didn’t—they couldn’t afford the Broiler Room. They usually went to the snack bar.

**Finchum** *Probably took less time too to go to the snack room.*

**Bohannan** Then we had a gift shop out there also. It had that pottery. Famous person here in Oklahoma.

**Finchum** *Frankoma.*

**Bohannan** Yes.

**Hensley** The old men liked to be called “boys,” but one time I had some black people and I called them “boy” and boy, he was going to have me fired.

**Bohannan** But, you know, I think that was the only colored people that I remember stopping there was that guy. He was something else.

**Finchum** *Do you remember someone dressing up in Indian, American Indian, outfit—costume, while you were there?*

**Hensley** That was a party.

**Bohannan** That was parties. We’d have to do that. Of course all that kind of stuff was for sale in the gift shop. We had a nice gift shop. It was nice when we worked out there. When you went in the entrance there was a fish pond, goldfish in it. Everybody—there was money. Make a wish, throw it in the goldfish and all. When they said they was going to put it back like it used to be I thought, “I have got to see this because there is nobody around that knew how it used to be but Ruth and I, and basically Darlene.” She hadn’t heard from Darlene as much as I have. I don’t know but I said, “No.” And then they slapped McDonald’s in there and something else and something else. I thought, “They just ruined it.” I have no desire to go back and look at it, because they just ruined it.

**Finchum** *So you were both gone by the time it became McDonald’s. And was it Howard Johnson’s somewhere in between?*

**Bohannan** After Interstate—no, it was Interstate Host.

**Finchum** *Well, McDonald’s came in in the ’80s, early ’80s?*

**Bohannan** I’m not sure when McDonald’s…

**Hensley** International Hosts was from California.

**Finchum** *They weren’t the ones that had it built though were they? Conoco had it built, didn’t it? Conoco built the building?*

**Hensley** I don’t know who had it built.

**Bohannan** I don’t remember.

**Hensley** Probably the Oklahoma Highway.

**Bohannan** The Turnpike Authority I think had it built. I don’t think Conoco did.

**Hensley** Because they wanted a restaurant up above the highway so everybody would stop.

**Finchum** *I read where it was the first one like that.*

**Hensley** It’s the only one like that I think.

**Bohannan** That I know of, it’s the only one. There might be others, but I think it’s the only one because it was known as the Glass House. It was never known as Interstate Host. Our checks were from Interstate Host.

**Finchum** *How often would you get paid? Once a week or…*

**Bohannan** I think we got paid every two weeks?

**Hensley** Every month I thought.

**Bohannan** I don’t remember, I don’t really remember.

**Hensley** I think it was once a month.

**Bohannan** It might’ve been.

**Finchum** *But then you got your tips that you took home every night. The waitresses would.*

**Hensley** Oh, yes.

**Finchum** *Made some good friends from those time periods?*

**Bohannan** Oh yeah, we had a lot of good friends, we had a lot of good people that worked. Annabell had this deal, God bless her, she’d hire the college kids.

**Hensley** You know Willard Stone?

**Finchum** *I’ve heard that name.*

**Hensley** He’s an artist and Annabell made a good friend of his. He liked to drink. And he would get drunk and she would buy his pictures. (Laughs)

**Bohannan** Anyway, these young girls, they wanted the money but they didn’t want the work. We tried to clean our own tables, but if she had a dirty table and I wasn’t busy, I cleaned her table and vice versa. Darlene would too, but we wouldn’t clean nobody else’s tables but us three’s. We done that.

**Finchum** *Took care of each other.*

**Bohannan** Yes, we truly did. If they was trying to hurry and get drinks or a special dessert, why, if we had time we’d help them. Very seldom had time but if we did, we helped one another. We helped one another a lot.

**Hensley** Did you know he was from Locust Grove and they have a museum over there for him.

**Finchum** *Did any famous people come through while you were working that you recall? Famous people?*

**Bohannan** Not that I know of. Oh there was…

**Hensley** Well, I had a race car driver.

**Finchum** *That counts!*

**Bohannan** He was from Oklahoma. He was a movie star. Big, black-headed guy. Gosh, I can’t remember his name. He come through one time…

**Finchum** *Garner is the only one I can think of, James Garner.*

**Bohannan** Yeah, he come through one time. He was on his way to St. Louis.

**Finchum** *Did any politicians? Like a governor or…*

**Bohannan** No, we were not allowed to do politics.

**Hensley** I’m through.

**Finchum** *You’re through? If you’re through, okay. I’ll say thank you for coming today if you’re through.*

**Hensley** You’re welcome.

**Finchum** *All right.*

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