

Age:

73

Main Topic: Balldel Ave Bars

End number on counter: _____

Subtopics: working

End number on counter: _____

General observations: working-class. Her language is wonderful
slangy, but she's been polite for us.

Description of person: Mrs. Anderson walks somewhat stiffly, due
to a recent fractured hip. Her memory is good, but the
questions must be asked to stimulate her.

Any problems?: We unfortunately got very little interesting information
from Mrs. Anderson. The interview situation was too formal
for the subject matter.

Suggestions for us?:

I'm planning to take Mrs. Anderson down
to Balldel Ave., & stimulate conversation that way.

Interview of Doris Anderson

Interviewer: Kathy Sharp
Interviewee: Doris Anderson

Date: 1/31/88

Location: 2450 Aurora Avenue North, Apt. 230

A In the church I was born in, my grandmother said her probably to the Catholics.

Q I forget whether we introduced ourselves.

Interviewee: Shannon: I did.

Q I'm not sure I told you my name. I'm Kathy Sharp.

A All right. They put a name on them?

Q And my maiden name is Olson, O-l-s-o-n. So that's -- but Sharpe. They called that all over. I guess.

A I see we got a deal for the -- our 55th wedding -- wedding? -- I mean reunion dinner.

Q For your school, you mean?

A Yeah, Ballard High School, 55 years since I got out of it.

Q ~~Yeah~~ Shannon: That was the class of . . .

A '33 ~~class~~. Did you know they came to Seattle?

Q ~~I don't~~ Shannon: Class of '33, was it? What year were you born? When's your birthday?

A May 10th, 1914 I was born.

Q ~~No~~ Shannon: 1914. What house were you born in?

Q Were you born in Ballard?

A Yeah, I was born in Ballard.

Shannon: Where was your house?
A It was on 59th between 14th and 15th.

Shannon: I know where that is, I know just where that is. Which wall did they work on?

A Yeah, they got a Catholic convent there now.

Shannon: Do they? What's the name of it?

A In the property I was born in. My grandmother sold her property to the Catholics.

Shannon: Oh. So the house isn't there

anymore? Have it ever been sold or everything else?

A No, it's still there. It's a teacher's house at Ballard High School. Shannon: They put a convent there?

A Yeah. My grandma's house, they moved down to Market Street. They moved that all over, I guess.

Shannon: And you said your dad came from Norway when he was two.

A Two, yeah. They went to Minneapolis. My grandparents had a grocery store back there.

Shannon: In Minneapolis?

A Yeah. Just across the river. That's the best I do, I

Shannon: Do you know why they came to Ballard?

A I don't know. Maybe there was more Norwegians here, I don't know. I don't know anything. You come up

Shannon: Probably so. I was parked out.

A No, I don't know. She had difficulty in getting in.

Q Did he have a grocery store at Ballard then? Is

A that what they --

A No. He worked in a mill. My dad worked in a mill and then my dad worked in grocery stores most of his life.

Shannon: Which mill did they work in?

A Oh, it was one down by Fremont. My grandfather worked there. I don't know the name of it.

Q Was it a shingle mill, or was it --

A I don't really know that.

Q (Continuing) -- a basic lumber mill? Yeah.

A My dad drove streetcars and everything else, I guess. I even had a teacher over at Ballard High School one time asked me about my dad driving streetcars. I says, "I don't know." So. . . I found out he did, though.

Q Is that right? Did you have brothers and sisters?

(Inaudible)

A . . . took one look at me and quit.

Q Well, he just knew you were so perfect, there was *any* use having any more.

A No, he just said, "If that's the best I can do, I ~~do~~, I quit. Good thing I understood him 'cause my mother had such a hard time getting me, and that was before Caesarian births or anything, you know, so I got a hole in my head where I was yanked out.

Q Oh, my goodness. She had difficulty in childbirth then.

A Yeah.

Q Now, what about your mother, was she Norwegian also then?

A She was Swedish descent.

Q See, that's exactly like my family, because my grandfather was Norwegian and his wife was Swedish, and they settled in Wisconsin for awhile before they came to Ballard. So it's interesting.

A Well, I worked the taverns in Ballard Avenue for a long time. Last one I worked at was Pete's Place.

Shannon: Where's that?

A First one on the Avenue.

Shannon: I know where that is. What's -- do you remember the address of it?

A 5445 Ballard Avenue.

Shannon: And that's Pete's Place?

A Yeah, and that was the name of the original owner.

Shannon: Uh-huh. What was his last name?

A Peterson, I think. It was Pete and Johnny that had it then. I was just old enough to be in there.

Matter of fact, I wasn't quite old enough to be in there.

Q That was your -- that was the first bar that you worked at?

A I didn't -- no. I worked at a lot of bars.

Ms. Sharp: Did you have some background questions you wanted to ask, Shannon, first before we get into the saloons? Did you need anything else

for the form or anything?

Q Shannon: Just basically -- no, I was interested in where your family came from because part of our history of Ballard is where people came from and why they came. But I'd love to hear about your work in the saloons as well or the taverns.

A I can tell you where Penney's started out in Ballard and where Bartell's started out in Ballard.

Q Shannon: Yeah, where are they? Where was Penney's? That was on the Avenue, wasn't it?

A Yeah, it was down where ^{the} Buffalo Tavery ^{is} now, but it was right on 22nd and Ballard Avenue on the north side -- on the west side of Ballard Avenue.

Q Shannon: That's not there anymore, is it?

A No, they moved up to Market Street after they left there.

Q Shannon: That's right.

A And Bartell's moved up. When Gallenkamp's moved out of their shoe store, then Bartell's moved up to where Gallenkamp Shoe Store was. Now they're up on 56th.

Q Well, can I ask you some questions specifically --

A Yeah.

Q (Continuing) about your work in the saloons? That's really of interest to me, especially since I have family background there.

Q Can you remember -- you worked in saloons for

what, 50 years?

A Just about.

Q Yeah. So do you remember the year you first began working or maybe how old you were when you first started working at a saloon?

A Probably in my early thirties.

Q Okay. And what was the first --what was the name of the first bar where you worked, do you remember?

A I don't know, I worked at Pete's Place and -- for 33 years, I think, and I worked up at the Viking for four owners.

Q The Viking, do you remember -- is that a bar that still exists in Ballard today?

A Oh, no, that's on 64th and 24th. He said he would've had me working more, but he had to support his sister anyhow -- sister-in-law anyhow so. . .

Q So Pete's Place is where you spent most of your time then?

A Yeah.

Q Do you know how far back Pete's Place -- I mean was Pete's Place one of the original bars in Ballard or --

A Yeah.

Q So it would have been one of the first ones?

A Yeah.

Q Okay.

A Like I said, I was only about 19 years old, but if

they kicked -- they didn't have the liquor board so much then

Shannon: You started when you were about 19 then?

A Yeah, I was about 19 when I first started going in there. But if they'd ^{kicked} me out, my mother and dad would ^{have} gone, my aunt and uncle and my cousin and her husband so . . .

Q Okay. So then did you work serving the drinks in the bar? Is that what --

A Not right at that time, no.

Q Yeah. So you just went as a customer then; is that what you mean?

A I was with my mother and dad. I went with them all the time. But I worked in a lot of them.

Q Well, what was -- now, you mentioned that there was Pete's bar and then what were the other bars that existed at the time in Ballard? You mentioned the Ballard Bar --

A Well, they had the Log Cabin, Chet's Log Cabin.

Q What was it again? Chet's?

A Yeah. There was two brothers there and one cousin or something and a brother-in-law. Chet Hodson and two Nelson boys that had it.

Q Yeah.

A After they left, then it was a Chinese joint, Chung King -- Chung King?

Q How interesting. Now was it owned by Chinese and did it serve primarily Chinese?

A It served Chinese food. It was a good place, too.

Q So it wasn't just a bar then, it was a --

A No

Q (Continuing) -- restaurant?

A Yeah, a restaurant at that time. Then it went back to being a bar again.

Q Okay. Then there was Pete's Place?

A Yeah. Pete's Place never changed its name. No matter who worked there, it was still Pete's Place. The last guy that owned it, he finally died of cancer of the esophagus.

Q Okay. Let's see. We talked about where Pete's Place was located, didn't we? I don't have it down in my notes.

Shannon: Yeah.

Q Where was it again, 54th and --

A 5445 Ballard Avenue.

Q Okay. Well, talking about Pete's Place in particular since you have more experience with that, do you know how old you were when you went to work there at the bar?

A Well, it was after my first husband died. No, I was married -- after my second husband died, I guess. I didn't keep them long.

- Q Okay. So you would have been about how old then, do you remember?
- A In my forties.
- Q Okay. Well, from your memories of just being a customer there or working there, how would you describe the atmosphere of Pete's bar? What did it look like and what kind of people went there?
- A It was kind of rough talking there but not much. It was a pretty well-run bar. And Marvin, the mayor, he was keeper.
- Q The mayor of Ballard was the saloon keeper?
- A No, he just was the one that cleaned up there a lot of times and had to empty the spittoons and everything.
- Q So he was actually a worker there at the bar?
- A Yeah. No, he didn't work at the bar. He was a little on the retarded side, but he was a heck of a good guy and everybody knew him. He sold papers on Ballard Avenue for years.
- Q Okay. So sometimes it was kind of rough talking. Who primarily went to that bar? Was it --
- A The working people, the fishermen, the working people.
- Q What about sailors?
- A Didn't have many sailors in there.
- Q Did they go somewhere else?
- A When the fleet was in, you mean?
- Q Yeah.
- A They probably went with a younger crowd.

Q Did they go to another bar in Ballard for example? Was there another place where they used to go?

A There was all kind of bars on Ballard Avenue. Street was lousy with them all the way down to the ...

Q So were the people that went to that saloon, they pretty much knew each other, they were friends?

A Yeah.

Q And it was kind of a neighborhood hangout kind of then?

A Yeah. Probably a lot of them worked in Seattle Cedar. That's where my dad worked.

Q Can you tell me what it looked like inside? I mean I can't imagine, like how it was decorated. Was it dark with lots of wood or brass or --

A I don't know, somebody asked me if they still had sawdust on the floor. They did when they first opened up, I think.

Shannon: Is that because people spit on the floor?

A Sure.

Q Did it get to be kind of an elegant bar, or was it pretty --

A No, it was never elegant.

Q Never elegant, okay.

A No, it was a workingman's bar.

Q What kinds of things were there to do? Was there any entertainment or special entertainment in the bar?

A No.

Q (Continuing) -- or anything? Did they play darts or

- A cards or -- ~~when English?~~
- A No, nothing like that.
- Q Okay. So they just pretty much came for a drink and --
- A Yeah, to buy my beer so I don't have any problems.
- Q (Continuing) -- and conversation?
- A Yeah, I'll go down and help her if she needs help. He
- Q That kind of thing? ~~got off track, I already had two~~
- A B.S., out the door.
- Q ~~Shannon:~~ Was it particularly Swedish or Norwegian people who came?
- Q Who came? ~~you bounce them out, you know, if they were~~
- A Usually, other people or if they were drinking too much.
- Q ~~Shannon:~~ Which, Norwegian or Swedish or both?
- A Both.
- Q ~~Shannon:~~ Uh-huh.
- A They are kind of clannish.
- Q ~~Shannon:~~ They are, that's right.
- A One doesn't like the other one maybe.
- Q ~~Shannon:~~ Were there any other bars where other groups of people went, like Irish or English?
- A No, I think it was all pretty -- Ballard was all pretty well Scandinavian.
- Q ~~Shannon:~~ That's right.
- Q Did they speak in Swedish or Norwegian when they were there, or did they -- ~~or didn't speak~~
- A Sometimes. That didn't help me any. I couldn't understand.

Q Did you only speak English? ~~about who I wanted~~

A Yeah. ~~an~~ I laughed at my youngest son. He was going to -- when I heard he went ~~(sic)~~ to tend bar, he was going to be my helper in case I had any problems.

Q Uh-huh. ~~now~~ Has this during the depression or just

A "Yeah, I'll go down and help Mom if she needs help." He said by the time he got off ^{the} stool, I already had two guys out the door. ~~and~~ ~~now~~ Yeah, I worked all day.

Q So you weren't afraid to bounce them out, huh?

A No. He had to join the union to be a bartender, and

Q What would you bounce them out for? If they were being annoying other people or if they were drinking too much?

A Well, if they were swearing too much, too, I'd throw them out. ~~and~~ ~~that's it~~ ~~that's it~~

Q Threw them out for swearing. Now when you first ~~were~~ went to work, were women served in the bar?

A Yeah. ~~remember things like that?~~

Q Or could they go to the bars then? ~~you remember once you~~

A Yeah. ~~talked about something.~~

Q Were there very many women that did?

A It got to be so there was. ~~outside of better a place~~

Q At first was it just a few?

A A few in the afternoons.

Q And how were they looked on by the rest of the city?

Did people look down on them for --

A No. ~~it's a dress now?~~

Q No, it was accepted?

A Yeah. They might have said things when I wasn't listening.

Q So the men didn't resent the women being there?

A No. Probably they tried to pick up a date, I don't know.

Shannon: Was this during the depression or just after? When you returned from Europe?

A After the depression -- no, the depression was still on. That lasted a long time. Yeah, I worked all my life, I think. My first husband, he was a book binder, but he had to join the union to be a book binder, and they couldn't afford to pay the union wages so he lost his job.

Shannon: That's rough.

Q Now was that in Ballard, too?

A No, that was downtown, Second and James or something.

Johnson & Horning was the name of the place. How come I can remember things like that?

Shannon: It's amazing what you remember once you start talking about something.

A Yeah.

Q Can you remember what the outside of Pete's Place looked like?

A Just the same as it does now.

Q Is that right?

A Only it's a dress shop now.

Q It's a dress shop now?

A Yeah, for big ladies.

Q Huh. When did Pete's Place close? Do you have any idea about --

A About the time he died, close to the end of the year.

Q Do you remember about how many years ago that might have been or how old you were then? Was that close to when you retired or --

A I retired when he kicked the bucket, yeah. I didn't have any place to work anymore.

Q Do you remember when that was approximately?

A I think I worked till I was 69.

Q Okay. So did it have flashing neon signs or what --

A No, it just had the one sign out there, "Pete's Place".

Q Pretty simple then?

A Yeah, nothing fancy, and he got so he only had one spittoon.

Q Oh, he kept his spittoons, did he?

A Yeah. They cleaned up at 10 o'clock, I think, every night.

Q All the time? Like before,

Q Shannon: Not for a crowd if there was only one.

Q Was there like a wooden bar or with a big glass mirror or bar rails or anything like that or --

A No, no bar rails.

Q Mostly just tables or what?

A No tables. They had some in the back room there for awhile when they had shuffleboard and stuff like that in there and pool.

Q Okay. Were there any special customs in the bar that

people had to observe during the time that

you were -- you have any kind of shop running?

A No, not that I can remember.

Q Do you remember what the busiest hours of the

saloon were? When did people start --

A Usually right after work when the people got off work.

Q Did it open before then? What time did the bars usually

open? we all know people that lived up there had to live

A Well, they usually opened about nine o'clock in the

morning, I think.

Q Wow. And they had customers that early? probably about

A Sure, they were the thirsty ones.

Q But it got really busy more after work, huh?

A Yeah.

Q How long would it stay busy? Did people -- during the

weekdays. I mean on weekdays would they stay late?

A Well, they closed at 12 o'clock, I think; they didn't stay open till late hours.

Q Was it pretty crowded, though --

A No.

Q (Continuing) -- even on weekdays?

A It was steady.

Shannon: Did people come in at nine in the morning, did they work the night shift?

A No.

Shannon: I used to live in a place where it was

open for breakfast because the sailors on the docks worked

and they ^{were} in for breakfast.

A Well, they used to have the Smoke Shop next door. The Smoke Shop is still next door there, the restaurant.

Shannon: I know where that is; I have seen that.

A Yeah. They had the Princess Hotel upstairs which isn't there any more. They built bigger apartments up there so all these people that lived up there had to find other places to live.

Q Yeah, that's rough.

How about prices, do you remember anything about prices from the time you first worked in the bar until--

A I think it was about 15 cents a glass.

Q For a glass of beer?

A Yeah. Then it went up to 65 cents when I was there at the last. Inflation.

Q Yeah. Did they serve anything else? Did they serve food at all in the bar?

A No.

Q It was just strictly --

A Somebody might send out for a order or something, you know, and divide it up with the customers or something.

Q Yeah, and they would bring it in and share it?

A Yeah.

Q Are there any saloons regulars that you can think of that particularly stand out in your mind, regular customers that were real characters that you

remember? always had the money from Pete's Place.

A No, I got rid of them. They'd come in me -- some of them would come in, "Hey, Doris, you going to serve us today? We haven't had a drink." I says, "Yeah, but I know what you're going to do when you do have a drink. Go down the street and drink."

Q So you would send them off?

A Yeah. Cedar Tavern.

Q Those were the ones that --

A Gave me a bad time, but I wouldn't serve them.

Q Do you remember any of their names?

A Heck, no, I never did know their names.

Q So was there a rowdier bar where they were accepted or --

A Yeah, they went down the street. I think they call it the Sunset Tavern now, I don't know. That was --

Q Shannon: That's still kind of tough; I have been in there. You like that? Was it just nice to everybody?

A That one young guy there that's working there, he's a pretty nice guy. After Pete's closed, then I'd ^{go} in there once in awhile, but I didn't like it that much.

Then I'd go up to the Viking. That was closer to home.

Q What about the owner was named Pete, the first owner?

A Yeah.

Q Now the man that -- when Pete's Place closed, who was the owner then? Was that Pete?

A No, his name was Dean Riddle.

Q Okay. Well, I don't understand. I understand you never

A But they always had the name Pete's Place.

Q Do you know anything about the original founder, what he was like, or did you --

A Yeah, I knew him. After Penney's moved out of Ballard Avenue down there, he started up the tavern down there where Penney's used to be.

R No, Shannon: What one is that now?

A The Cedar Tavern.

Q What was his full name? Pete.

A Pete Peterson, I guess.

Q Yeah, okay. That's right. It's a restaurant now, isn't it?

A I think he came from Eau Claire, Wisconsin, probably came from Norway, or someplace in the first place.

Q What was he like? Was he someone that was --

A He was real nice.

Q Why did you like him? Was he just nice to everybody or --

A Yeah, he was nice to everybody.

Q Was he pretty ^{much} of a gentleman and respected?

A Yeah, yeah, he had taverns -- he had a tavern up in Edmonds one time.

Q Was he pretty prosperous if he had all these taverns?

A Well, he didn't own them all at one time.

Q Uh-huh.

A It was Pete and Johnny that had it in the first place. That's all I can remember. I never did remember for

sure about their last names. I talked to some other girl that went to Ballard when I did. And her mother and dad used to go to Ballard a lot, too. And my cousin was telling me about the old fire station. I had forgotten about that.

Q That was the name of a tavern?

A No, that was a fire station.

Q Oh, okay

Shannon: The big firehouse on Market Street?

A Market Street, yeah, close to 15th.

Shannon: That's right. It's a restaurnt now, isn't it?

A I guesss so, yeah. It's across the street.

Shannon: That's a big place.

A Yeah. Denny's, isn't it, or something?

Shannon: It's still a restaurant. I don't know who owns it, but . . .

A One on the same -- south side of the street, too, there.

Shannon: Yes.

A I can't even remember the name of that one.

Q Do you remember any of the people that you worked with at the bar?

A Yeah.

Q Did you work with them for a number of years or --

A Yeah, Reece Conrad was one of them.

Q Reece Conrad?

A Yeah.

- Q And is she about your age?
- A She. She makes, "I like Darlene, she's a good bartender."
- Q She, okay. Is she about your age?
- A She is dead.
- Q Would she be about your age?
- A No, she would be a little older than me.
- Q How did she come to work at the bar, do you know?
- A She used to be down at Fisherman's Wharf down there in a restaurant. I don't know whether they asked her to come there to work or not. She worked there for a good many years. She was well-liked.
- Q Was it -- you know you mentioned that your son was a little worried about you working in a tavern?
- A Yeah.
- Q Was it pretty tough for a woman to be working in a tavern in those days?
- A No, I didn't have any problems.
- Q Yeah. The men didn't -- they treated you with respect pretty much?
- A Yeah. Oh, there was a few fights down there when I was working there, but didn't last long.
- Q Can you tell me about the fights? What were they like?
- A Well, one smart alec guy down there, he was going to knock me on my butt one day or something.
- Q Ooh. Shannon: What did you do?

A So he said -- he told Dean one time, he said -- you know, he said, "I like Doris, she is a good bartender, but," he says, "I don't like to see her drinking behind the bar," which I never did, 'cause that would have my job if I had.

Anyhow, my old man came -- my last husband came down there that next day, and he was six foot two and this other guy was short. Scared the crap out of him.

Shannon: Good for you.

Q So did they actually get in a fight?

A No.

Q No. He just told him to quit bothering you, huh? Did you ever see other customers, though, having big fights? Did anybody ever have to get arrested after they had been drinking awhile or something?

A No.

Q And started being rough?

A No, they had the beat cop down there all the time. He'd checked once in awhile.

Q The beat cop?

A Yeah.

Q So he'd just make sure everything --

A Yeah.

Q Was under control?

A I had a good experience one time when I worked at the Ballard Tavern. The liquor inspector came in there, and there was one young guy in there used to

go to the Viking, too, so I knew him. He never caused any trouble, you know. Anyhow, he was kind of loaded that day. So the liquor inspector went over to talk to him, wanted to see his ID. Well, the young guy says, "You show me your ID." So the liquor inspector did and everything went fine.

Q So he was okay, he was legitimate, he wasn't too young to be in there?

A No, he wasn't too young to be in there, no, but he was slightly loaded. As a matter of fact, after the liquor inspector left, he cashed in.

Q Bet you were kind of relieved nothing happened, huh?

Okay. What about -- it sounds like your saloon was pretty quiet and under control?

A Yeah.

Q But were there some where you would hear about fights going on and --

A Yeah. We had one guy in there -- well, a couple of guys -- this young -- this other guy that I said liked to fight, he picked on some of these older guys to fight with; then he knocked them on their butt one night, and I says --

Q Right from the bar?

A Yeah.

Q Hit 'em in the face and knocked 'em out?

A He knocked him to his knees anyhow.

Q Yeah.

A But anyhow, I threw him out. No brains, but I had some
--- I was as big as that guy so I was all right.

Shannon: How did you get him out of there? Did you
just--did you have to --

A He just walked out when I told him to.

Shannon: Oh, good.

Q We had one guy there, he'd sit there and he'd drink all
night long and he never caused anybody a problem, you
know, but when he'd get up to go out, his noses
would almost be on a slant like that and almost
touching the pavement. But he always behaved himself.

Q Was he -- he just liked to drink a lot, but was he
someone that could hold a job and everything? I mean it
wasn't --

A I don't know. He was a painter, I think. He did his
work all right. Had a lot of fun down there.

Q What did you like best about working there?

A Salary probably.

Q Oh, yeah. Was it pretty good wages for a woman?

A No, they only paid you minimum wage.

Q Do you remember what minimum wage was, how much it was
when you first started working?

A No.

A No. ~~minimum~~. What was the ~~minimum~~?

Q Probably less than a dollar an hour, I bet?

A I bet you it was, too. I think the most I ever got was
about a dollar sixty-five an hour, but I supported my

three kids on that.

Q Wow. What about did any politics go on in your bar or in some of the other ones that you knew about where people would be having political rallies for candidates for mayor or things like that?

A No, nothing like that, I don't think. That was a no-no in the bars really.

Q Is that right?

A Sure, 'cause it started a lot of fights.

Q Yeah. So that people went somewhere else if they were going to gather for those kinds of things, huh?

A Yeah.

Q That's interesting.

A You don't argue religion or politics in a bar. I used to go down to the Owl Tavern once in awhile.

Shannon: I know the Owl.

A Yeah. And Melling (phonetic) was the bartender down there. And I got the hiccups one night and I couldn't stop. He said, "Drink your beer through a handerchief, Doris."

Q Oh, my goodness.

Shannon: Did it work?

A It worked, yeah.

Shannon: What was the Owl like?

A You're concentrating so much on trying to get the beer through the handerchief that you forget you got the hiccups.

Shannon: That's right.

What was the Owl Tavern like back then?

A Nice.

Shannon: Was it nice?

A Yeah, you could come in the back way, and a lot of people used to come in the back way and bring beer home for their dad or something. Kids probably come in there, you know.

Shannon: That's a really nice place. It's all wood now, isn't it, really pretty in there.

A Yeah. They had a theater down there next to -- in that area, too. I think my mother used to take me down there on Sundays. I think it was only five cents, ten cents to go to the show.

Shannon: What kind of shows did they have then?

A I don't know. I forgot.

Shannon: What did you use to like? What was it? Why don't you remember? Charlie Chaplin wouldn't have been right, that ^{was} later than that. Do you remember?

A No.

Shannon: What was the name of the theater?

A I don't even remember that.

Shannon: That was right next to the Owl?

A Yeah.

Shannon: I'd like to have seen that.

A A door or so away maybe. It was right near the Owl.

Shannon: You might remember it right along.

A We had a few other theaters here. We had the Princess Theater -- or Empress Theater where the Ballard Hospital is, on the street that goes to Ballard Hospital. I used to go there on Sundays a lot.

Q During the time that you were working in the saloons, did the townspeople get along pretty well with sailors ^{there} in port, or what about did you ever have, you know, Blacks or minority groups or things like that that --

A No.

Q (Continuing) -- wouldn't mix together very well?

A No.

Q Was there ever -- do you remember, did you ever hear -- you wouldn't go back this far, but did you ever hear stories about what happened during Prohibition when they weren't supposed to have alcohol served? What did people do? Did they stop drinking in Ballard or --

A Heck, no.

Q What did they do?

A They made their own. They made their home brew. I sold home brew supplies for awhile, too.

Q Is that right?

A Yeah.

Shannon: What did they make it out of?

A Malt and stuff.

Shannon: They made beer that way?

A Yeah.

Shannon: I don't know how to make beer. They make whiskey out of potatoes in Ireland where I was for awhile.

A Yeah.

Q So when you sold home brew, was that before you went to work in a tavern or --

A Yeah.

Q Yeah. Do you remember how old you were then?

A I was in my early 30s.

Q Did you make it yourself?

A I had to. I had to know what I was talking about.

Q So you actually made it and sold it yourself?

A I didn't sell it myself. You don't sell it, you just sell the material to make it.

Q Oh, I see.

A You don't sell it already made up.

Q I see. So you sold them the raw

material, and then

they'd make it in their own homes?

A Yeah, (inaudible.)

Q What all did you ^{sell} tell them? Did you have like a recipe or something that you gave them?

A Yeah. And they had hydrometers they bought and siphons.

Shannon: How do you make it? I have always wanted to know how to make it.

Q Yeah, tell us about that.

A I don't know, you put all the stuff in the big crock and let her work there so many days. I forgot how many days.

Q Does it cook? Do you cook it in a crock? Is that what you do? Now, they got a whole bunch of hops there.

A You put it on top of your electric heaters, water heater or something. That's what we always did.

Q It kind of ferments there for a few days?

A Yeah. Right? Now did that happen --

Q What else besides malt would be in it?

A The yeast and . . . I forget what other stuff.

God, that was a long time ago.

Q Oh, Shannon: I bet you know how to make it. How about

do you put sugar in it?

A Sure, corn sugar.

Shannon: Corn sugar?

A Yeah, you had to have corn sugar because the regular sugar made it -- what do they call it? Methyl alcohol or something --

Q Yeah, yeah, yeah.

A (Continuing) -- that wasn't good for you.

Q Yeah, yeah.

A You couldn't use that kind of sugar; you had to use corn sugar.

Q So you'd actually sell like the malt and the yeast and the corn sugar, or did you --

A Yeah.

Q (Continuing) -- sell them some kind of a base that they

then -- so in their own homes they would cook up --

A Well, they had their own malt that they made, too.

Shannon: How do you make malt?

A I don't know, they got a whole bunch of hops there.

Shannon: What do you do with the hops?

A Put them in there, too, everything but the kitchen sink.

My kids got my dog drunk one night.

Q Is that right? How did that happen?

A Well, they were -- my husband was bottling the beer and spilling it on the floor, you know, so the kids would shove the dog out there and he'd lick it up and --

Q Oh, no.

A (Continuing) -- bump his head against the sink. I liked that dog.

Shannon: What was his name?

A "Spike".

Q That's appropriate, "Spike" for the ...

A But he was -- he'd bite the garbage man, he'd bite the grocery man, he'd bite the -- anybody -- the mailman. Fuller Brush man'd come to the door; he'd stand there and wag his tail like come on in.

Q And then he'd bite, huh?

A Yeah, he'd bite him.

Q Lure him in and --

Shannon: Bite he was supposed to.

Q Do you remember when prohibition was over with? Was there some big celebration in town when the bars could

open again?

A They were probably all drunk. I don't remember that. I should.

Q Somebody told me, and I don't know if you know anything about this, that during prohibition sometimes they would get liquor from Canada and bring it in. Did you ever hear anything about?

A I don't know. They would probably make a lot of trips up there, bring some home with them.

Q Yeah, could be. Were there any -- did you ever have any fires or any disasters like that at your bar that you remember?

A No.

Q Yeah. Some of the early bars, I guess, practically burned to the ground, didn't have much of a . . .

Well, there is something that you may know something about, maybe you heard rumors about it; it may not have been going on at the time you were working at the bar. But did you ever know of illegal activities going on either in the back of the bar or near the bar or in hotels or something like that, like illegal gambling or prostitution?

A There could have been a lot of that stuff going on. I didn't know about it.

Q You weren't aware of it, huh? You didn't hear them talking about?--

A No, There's just bound to be stuff like that where

there's drinking anyhow.

Q Well, that's what you kind of think. Do you happen to know anybody who might know something about that?

A I don't think so. The only one I could tell you that might know something in this -- her name was Agnes Jensen, and they were in Ballard for years and her mother and dad used to be on the Avenue a lot.

Q Do you know where she lives now?

A Yeah, I have her address.

Q Oh, you do?

A And her phone number.

Q Do you think you would be willing to share that with us?

A Yeah, yeah.

Q Her phone number?

A Yeah.

Q She might be someone we might want to talk to.

A But if she gets talking, she'll never shut up.

Q Oh, well --

Shannon: We like that.

Q That's good, we need to learn a lot.

A Don't mind me. When I first get up, I have to --

Q Am I in the way?

A No.

Q Can I hand you anything? Is it in here?

A It's all in here.

Q That's good if you know where everything is.

Shannon: (Inaudible)

A They put your name in indelible ink on all your clothes and everything so nobody can steal it. I lost a lot of blouses out there. I still got two pairs of light green slacks out there. They send me something once in awhile.

Shannon: Oh, it says Toots Melanson.

Shannon: But her last name is Millansener when she got married. Her address is 1748 Northwest 56th. That's almost behind the Valhalla Tavern.

Q Oh. Behind the Owl, did you say?

A Valhalla.

Shannon: Valhalla, I know where that is. 1948 Northwest 56th (sic).

A And her phone number is 782-2474.

Shannon: 2474. What's her name again?

A Melanson (phonetic).

Shannon: Vallansy (phonetic)?

A M-e-l-a-n-s-o-n. She graduated from high school. She's a year and a month -- one day younger than me.

Shannon: 17460. Did she work in the bars in Ballard Avenue as well?

A No, she didn't work. She and her mother and dad, they were good customers.

Shannon: I see.

A And her husband was, too, when he was alive. He kicked the bucket.

Shannon: Is it seems like -- was there a whole group of people, though, that everybody in the avenue knew everybody else pretty much?

A Yeah. My mother and dad knew her mother and dad real well.

Q What did -- you mentioned that you were under age when you started going to the taverns?

A Yeah.

Q Was that pretty common for teenagers to go to the bar and be served?

A I don't know whether it was or not. If you come in in a group, they don't question you too much, I guess.

Q Yeah.

A They look at you and you figure you're old enough anyhow. They weren't so fussy in those days.

Shannon: Was the drinking age 21 back then?

A Probably was, but they didn't have anybody come ⁱⁿ and checking your ID or anything in those days.

Shannon: What about little, little kids, did they let those in if they came in with their parents?

A Sometimes they did.

Q Do you have any kind of outstanding memory from working in the bars, sometime that you always think about or that either a happy experience or maybe a frightening one?

A Well, I met all my husbands in that bar.

Q Is that right?

Shannon: Really?

A Yeah.

Q That's interesting. So you were married two times?

A Three.

Q Three times?

A Yeah. First one used to tell me he was

going

to die before he was 35 years old near the water.

Well, he was 36 years old when he died. He couldn't have been much closer to the water; he was crossing 24th and 56th. I used to kid him. I said if anything happened to him, I'd have to bury him out in the backyard, but he didn't --

He just started working in the Navy yard then. My second husband died on his lunch hour at Seattle Cedar.

Q He had a heart attack?

A Yeah, that was when Kennedy died? No. What was it again?

Shannon: Kennedy in '64?

A No. '64. It was around -- it was a little after the '60s there.

Q '63 was when Kennedy died.

Shannon: Yeah, I was a baby.

Q I wasn't.

A I drove him to work that day, I know that.

Q Was it the same day that Kennedy died or just close to

it?

A Well, he got killed the night before, I guess.

Q My goodness.

A Or in the morning, I don't know. I know it was when he died. So they came out to get me; I was working in the home brew place then, and they came out to get me. Two guys from the mill came up to get me. They didn't -- they told me he was in the hospital; they didn't tell me he was dead. So I sat there all afternoon, and nobody and nobody paid any attention to me. So finally some some nurse came over and asked me. I said, "Somebody said my husband was here." So they asked me what his his name was, and I told them, and they said, "Well, didn't they tell you he was dead?" I says no, no.

Shannon: That's a terrible way to find out.

A Yeah. Well, that one personnel guy down there, I don't know whatever religion he was, but it must be a good one.

Q During the time that you were working in the saloons and everything, were there any churches or politicians or something like that that would be critical of the saloons in Ballard and give you a hard time?

A They didn't -- weren't critical of them. They'd come in and get donations once in a while, Salvation Army or something.

Q Oh, is that right?

A Yeah.
Q So they were pretty well accepted in the community then, right?

A Yeah.
Q As just a normal part of the community?

A Yeah.
Q Do you know Shannon: Somebody told me about a guy who was running for mayor. It had been awhile ago. And he didn't get accepted 'cause he was trying to close the saloons down. I don't remember his name, though.

A That would be a no-no. We did have a mayor here in Ballard for years. They'd already had it or

Shannon: What was his name?

A Fitzgerald.
Shannon: Mayor Fitzgerald. That's an Irishman.

A Yeah, went to school with his kids, one kid. We had our own health department, too.

Shannon: Did you? a little shorter.
A Yeah, it was on the east side of Ballard Avenue.

Shannon: Did they come in and inspect the place and that sort of thing? and it, came to the houses, my

A No, this was just -- my mother had to take me to Ballard one time to get a thing to put on our door because I was -- I had the chicken pox or something.

Shannon: Oh, you got quarantined? another got it.
A Yeah. kept out in her room. "cause she was sick and

Shannon: How did that work? Did they put a thing

on your door, a sign saying nobody could come in or
on your door, "Quarantined"?

A They just -- that's all they did was put on -- if you had
chicken pox, you just didn't go no place, that's all.

Paidia Shannon: Oh.

A But we had to walk down there to get it.

Q So you exposed the whole community while you're getting
your quarantine notice?

A Yeah. I guess many others. I guess like this mother, that's

Q That's funny.

Shannon: Could nobody go in and out of the house?

A Well, they could if they'd already had it or ~~about it~~
something, you know.

Paidia Shannon: Yeah. That's a little bit rough.

Hann How long did that last, your chicken pox?

A About when they started coming to the house and putting
the signs on the doors themselves, I guess.

Paidia Shannon: That's a little smarter!

A Yeah.

Q Were you sick for a long time?

A Well, when my kids had it, came to the house, my
youngest kid, they says -- or all my kids, they said,
"Well, it's hard to tell on them whether they got the
mumps or what because," he said, "their faces are so
round." When my youngest -- when my daughter got it,
they found out it was the mumps 'cause she swelled up
all over.

Shannon: Oh.

Q Now have your kids stayed in the Ballard area , or where do they live now?

A My daughter lived down in Florence, Oregon, and my eldest son, he had 20 years in the service, and he's still working for Uncle Sam delivering mail down in Tacoma?

Q Oh, nice to have him close by, sort of close by.

A I don't see him very often. I don't like his wife. She's 12 years older than him.

Shannon: Is she not very nice?

A He used to call me -- he never called me without it being collected. He was in Spokane stationed in Fairchild Air Force Base. "Mom, can Sergeant and Mrs. Hann (phonetic) stay at our house during the World's Fair?"

I says sure, why not. So I had them and three kids staying at my house.

Shannon: How long for?

A Oh, it was only -- not too long, maybe a week or something.

Shannon: That's not bad.

A So then when I went over to Spokane, then I got to stay at their house.

Shannon: That's all right, that's fair.

A But he was very good about "Mom, can these kids ride part way home with us? Mom, can they ride a little far *ther*

with us? Mom, can they stay at our house?"

Q He believed in hospitality, didn't he?

A They were good kids, though. They called me Sherm.

A Yeah. Shannon: Sherm?

A Sherm, short for Sherman tank 'cause I was real heavy then.

Q Oh, is that right?

A Yeah.

Q Did you know Shannon: You're very slim now.

A Yeah, I don't weigh so much now. I think it was the food they gave me out there at that Ballard Convalescent Center, I couldn't eat it. We would wait till they came around late at night, and they would either give you a sandwich or some ice cream, and we'd all yell for the ice cream.

Q Did you have any nicknames when you worked at the bar? You know you mentioned that these people called you Sherm for Sherman tank? Did you have any nicknames at the bar? Did they call you any pet names?

A No, I think it was worse than that. No, not really.

A They liked my depraved sense of humor. I made people laugh.

Q Did you tell jokes or tease them or --

A I just was sarcastic enough.

Shannon: So am I.

A That's what this guy that's manager of this place, We always got to fighting 'cause he is Norwegian and

I'm part Swede, so Norwegian will fight Swedes.

I'd run the Norwegians out.

Q That'll get him going? He's only twice as bigger, aren't he?

A Yeah.

Q Did your -- now when you were married, were you tending bar when you were married for some of those times? You said you met your three husbands,

A Yeah. I married the second man when I came down there. The

Q Did your husbands mind you working at the bar?

A No.

Q They knew you could take care of yourself, huh?

A Yeah. Well, my second husband didn't want me to work at all. He wanted me to stay home and take care of the kids.

Q What did you say to that?

A I worked. It's a good thing I did, too, 'cause I had to do it anyhow. I think I worked long enough.

Q Yes, that's a lot of years. ~~fact of fact~~. I was only 16.
Shannon: What kind of jobs did you have before you went to work at the bar?

A Well, I worked down at Sears for awhile. I was working in the accounting department or something, running one of those big comptometers.

Shannon: What's that?

A You added and subtract and multiply on the

dumb things.

Shannon: Oh, yeah, somebody told me about that. They're like calculators, only they're bigger, aren't they?

Q Yeah, you got to use all your fingers. And then I'd have to go on each floor and drop some of them off, so I got a little rest from the comptometer. Anyhow I got married the second time when I was down there. The fellow that was running the place then, he said, "Boy," he said, "I wish my mother's remarried."

I guess he got stuck with taking care of his mother ~~his mother~~ all the time.

Q So you've always been a pretty independent woman, haven't you?

A Yeah, I paid my own way.

Shannon: How old were you when you first started working on your first job?

A In my early twenties. As a matter of fact, I was only in my teens when I started working in a grocery store on Saturdays, one my dad worked in.

Shannon: Your dad work in which one?

A Bunson Brothers Grocery, (phonetic) 61st and 22nd.

Shannon: That's a good memory you have. Is that still there now, Bunson Brothers?

A No. Used to -- all these supermarkets took all those out.

Shannon: Those are horrible.

A Yeah.

Q You know, wasn't that pretty unusual for a girl your age to work in those days?

A Well, that was only one day a week. When I was -- we were camping over at Suquahmish, I'd have to take the ferry over to Ballard. That's all. That's when I was afraid of cows, and we'd have to go passed those cows every time we went down to go over to watch the boats come in.

(Side 2)

Q ... today in your experience with working in the bars, that's really been helpful. We may think of some other questions we'll want to ask you later or something as we go back to the notes and think of some more things to find out about. I appreciate you giving us the name of Agnes to check on. Is there anybody else you can think of that we should give a call to?

A I don't know, unless my cousin Francy would want to say something.

Q Did she live in Ballard?

A Yeah.

Q What is her last ^{name} ~~name~~?

A Dahlstrom..

Q D-a-h-l --

A S-t-r-o-m.

Q Do you know how to get ahold of her?

A Yeah, I've got to get my little red book back out again.

- Q Okay. So what work do you do for hours around?
- A When I get (inaudible) in here at night, sometimes I call everybody I know up.
- Q Shannon: So do I.
- A 'Cause, you know, after you've had your dinner and there's really not nothing -- anything to do unless they have a movie downstairs or something. And then I get blues.
- Q Well, you're used to being around a lot of people obviously.
- A Yeah, I'm used to having people to people to talk to till 12, one o'clock, sometimes two o'clock in the morning, whenever they closed.
- Q Is that how late you'd sometimes work?
- A Well, sometimes they'd closed at two, depending upon the tavern and how the business was. Well, my cousin lives at 2640 Northwest 56th. 783-5452.
- Q Did she ever work at saloons, or did she just like to sometimes go to them maybe?
- A No, she didn't even like that. She doesn't drink at all any more. I haven't been either since I broke my hip.
- Q Is that right? So how long were your hours, your working hours? If you worked till one or two in the morning, did you start in the morning or did you come in later?
- A No. Sometimes I'd go to work at three o'clock, sometimes I'd go to work at noon, only depending on what I was --

Q So you might work as many as 12 hours a day?

A No, not very often. ~~you know, from what they~~ Did you ever

Q More like a regular workday?

A I had one woman when I worked at the Viking Tavern, you know, you have to sit down to drink, and somebody wanted to buy me a beer and I wasn't working behind the bar that day, I was standing up on a ladder, cleaning some light fixtures. And she wasn't going to let me have a beer. She said. "She has to sit down." So it was my music teacher's husband. Anyhow he says, "Sit down, Doris." So I sat down on the ladder. He said, "Now give her a beer, she's sitting down."

Shannon: Good for you.

Q Well, thank you a lot. This is really nice of you to let us to come in and talk to you and get some ideas from you.

A If I'd had a few drinks, maybe there would have been more (inaudible).

Q Well there, that should have been part of our technique.

Shannon: That's true. Do you still go out? Do you still drink at all?

A I don't drink much. I've had 12 pack of -- no, I've got 11 cans here. I drank one of them since I have lived here.

Q You know, do you have any momentos from the bar at all?

A No. take pictures

Q Or do you have any pictures from the bar? Did you ever take photographs?

A No. Somebody did.

Q Yeah?

A But I don't know where anything is now. Right now I don't know where anything is.

Shannon: Well, you just moved here recently, didn't you?

A Yeah, in October, I think it was, the last part of October when they opened up.

Shannon: That's right.

Where did you use to live? Where was your old house?

A I lived all over. The last place I lived was on 26th above 65th.

Shannon: Is that where your cat is now?

A Yeah. And one of the neighbors when I was there one time says, "Can we have the cat?" I says, "Sure, you can have it if you want it."

The dumb cat doesn't know he's frustrated. And my daughter-in-law's sister lives in my house now, and that cat's pregnant all the time. I guess if I -- I don't know what my cat's hanging around for.

Shannon: (Inaudible) cat.

A He can't do anything.

Q Now this picture -- do you have other pictures like this one, or is this one that you always keep with you?

A No, my kid brought it down last night. He says, "Don't spill any food on it, don't let anybody have it." He says, "I'm going to put it in a frame."

Shannon: That's a nice picture.

Q It's really nice.

A That's all Ballard people in there.

Q That's the Norwegian Men's Chorus then, huh?

A Yeah.

Q Do you have any idea, if your dad was 15 at the time that was taken --

A Yeah. Do you remember his name? Alice Olson or something.

Q What year would that -- what year was he born, do you remember? Do you have an idea --

A 1889. I think he would have been born when

Q So it would have been about 1904 maybe?

A Could be.

Q When that was taken. Just right at the turn of the century pretty much?

A Yeah. My mother was born in 1902 up by Pisht, Washington. Nobody knows where that is. ~~The Washington nobody knows where that is.~~

Q I have heard of Pisht.

Shannon: I know know where Pisht is, by Port Townsend -- by Port Angeles.

A Yeah.

Q That's where I was raised is Port Angeles.

Now I have to ask you one question before I go.

A Yeah.

Q Well, actually it's a series of questions.

You mentioned that you graduated from Ballard High School.

A Yeah.

Q See, my dad was born in 1917 so he would have been a little bit behind you.

A Yeah.

Q And he probably went to Ballard High School. He had an older sister Alice and an older sister Mildred.

Do you remember either Alice Olson or Mildred Olson or a Norm Olson, Norman Olson?

A I can't think of them right now.

Q How big a school would Ballard have been? When you graduated, do you know how many people graduated in your class with you about?

A Holy criminy, that's 55 years ago.

Q I mean like was it -- like do you think it was like a hundred kids in your class? Or was the school pretty small?

A I think it was probably more than that.

Q Yeah. Oh, it was a pretty big school then?

A Yeah.

Q Interesting. Do you keep any of those old yearbooks?

A I have got it all at home someplace.

Q Is that right?

A I don't have everything here. My kid hasn't brought all my stuff yet.

Q So now, the kid that has it is the one from Tacoma?

A No.

Q No?

A My youngest son.

Q Oh, I see.

A He is a Henrickson.

Q I see.

A My other two kids were Webber, with two b's.

I had to go all through my life explaining how to spell my kids' last name. Two b's in Webber; there's no d in Henrickson.

Shannon: That's confusing. Webber's an English name, isn't it?

A German and English.

Shannon: That's right.

A It was the activity director here that got in contact with you kids.

Q Oh, is that right?

Shannon: That's Carol. Her name's Carol, isn't it?

A Yeah.

Shannon: Nice lady.

A Yeah. She's the one that takes us out in the van once in awhile to go shopping or up to Green Lake or someplace like that.

Q Oh, that's nice. I enjoyed it. And, yeah, were there.

Shannon: Would you like to come down to Ballard Avenue and show us around sometime and tell us how things were? We are trying to write a history book, and nobody

A Yeah. I know so many people.

Q Shannon: That would be fun. I'd really like to hear old stories about Ballard Avenue.

A Yeah. Would you like to do that sometime?

A Well, that guy that originally owned Pete's Place is the one that had the one on the corner where Penney's was.

Shannon: Is it? You could probably just show us where everything was.

A Yeah. They had Parky's Pool Hall down there, too.

Shannon: Yeah. I bet you'd remember everything once you were down there. We could go in for a beer somewhere where you used to work or something. The Owl Tavern --

A There's no tavern there now; they only got that dress shop for fat people. ~~enough room for them~~

Shannon: That's right. The Owl --

Q But the Owl is.

Shannon: The Owl is nice. Maybe we can arrange that sometime next week. Okay, that would be a lot of fun. ~~probably fifteen~~

Q Well, shall we let her have some peace?

Shannon: Yes.

A I enjoyed this. I hope I did something for you.

Q That's good. We enjoyed it, too. Yeah, sure have.

Shannon: We don't know very much about Ballard,
you know, because nothing has been written down,
and we are trying to write a history book, and nobody
really knows so we have to ask people.

A My kids went to school where that Norwegian Heritage is.

Q The Nordic Heritage Museum.

A Yeah.

Shannon: That's Webster, isn't it?

A Yeah.

Shannon: That's a beautiful old school.

Q Yeah, that's right.

A I only lived about four houses down from there then.

Shannon: That's a nice neighborhood.

A And I had to move away from there when my dad died
and go live with my mother.

Shannon: That's tough.

A And I hated it. She said she couldn't live up at my
house because there wasn't enough room for her. I had
eight rooms and a full basement and a fireplace.

Q Oh, my goodness.

A And I had to move down to a dump and I was mad.

Q Now how old were you then?

A In my forties, probably fifties.

Q Well, that's hard.

Shannon: Well, it was nice to talk ~~to~~ you with
you.

Q It was very nice, very nice. You have a very nice place
here.

A Yeah.