

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM PERSONAL DATA RECORD

Name Helen Cairns Bryce Address 2191 N Linden Rd Mer
 Date of Birth Apr 30 1914 Place of Birth Murdan on Linden Rd
 Year you or your parents came to Idaho (specify) Father 1898 Mother 1904
 Year came to the area you now live in _____ Place first lived in Idaho _____
 Place emigrated from ^{Father} Wisconsin SD to Wash then to Ida
 Mode of travel ²⁴ Father - train - hitchhiking - came w brother
 Route of travel railroad

FAMILY: Spouse Frank Bryce Date and place married Merid 10/7/1937
 Brothers and sisters (married names) Donald Cairns ^{widow} (2 yrs younger)
Arnold Cairns - Mtn Home

Father's name Charles A Cairns
 Date of birth July 8 1877 Place of birth Mt Hope Wisc
 Date of death Nov 9 1943 Place of death Valley Co, Id
 Ancestor's homeland Scotland
 Major occupation(s) (what, where, when, if known) _____
Sheep Raising farming fruit

Mother's maiden name Susie Monlux
 Date of birth May 27, 1885 Place of birth Spencer SD.
 Date of death Feb 12 1975 Place of death Bruce, Id
 Date married May 8, 1912 Place married Bruce
 Ancestor's homeland Ireland

Occupation(s) She ran Methodist Church cooking crew for mt when New York Canal
1906-1912
 Children (yours) _____ Date of birth _____ Place of birth _____

James D. Aug 27, 1939 Bruce
Carol Ann June 21, 1941 Bruce

(over)

Children (yours) (continued)

Date of birth

Place of birth

Your career record

Occupation(s) what, where, and when Lawrence (46)

school teacher 37 yrs - all in Ada Co
Blue Valley, Victory Star Mdn

Schooling Victory Grade - MHS - Lewiston State, CoId

Principal activities and interests other than livelihood Traveling, Crafts

volunteering

Military service and rank

Additional notes:

Alaska Ex, Natl Ed
Alpha Delta Kappa Team
UMC
Loud Grove, Ponona
Mdn Shl In
St Alu Shl cross

This is an interview with Helen Bryce, visiting with Lila Hill and Jean Davis.

There's a questionnaire that is your vital statistics and we decided rather than just have you fill it out, we would put it on the machine and have a way to double check it.

It starts out with your name and address.

Helen Cairns Bryce
2191 N. Linder Rd.
Meridian, Idaho

It gets nose - like the date of your birth and place.

April 30, 1914.

In Meridian, ID. a couple miles south of where I'm sitting now.

What year did your parents come to Idaho?

My father came in about 1898 and my mother in 1904.

Did they come directly to this area?

My father did, and my mother left South Dakota and went to Washington for a few years then came to the Boise area.

So the first place they lived in Idaho would be Boise Valley?

Yes.

What was their mode of travel?

My father came on the train and hitchhiking. I don't know how my mother came.

Did your father come as a single adult?

Yes, he was about 24. His parents did not come, but a brother came, too.

Spouse: J. Frank Bryce. Married in Meridian, October 7, 1937.

Your brothers and sisters and sisters married names:

I had no sisters, but I have a brother, Donald, two years younger than I, and I have a brother, Arnold. Arnold lives at Mountain Home, Donald died when he was 18.

Father's name: Charles A. Cairns, born July 8, 1877. I almost hate to give that because he says he was born in 1878, but the family Bible says 1877. I almost feel like a traitor when I give that. He was born in Wisconsin - Mt. Hope.

Date of death: November 9. 1943. in Valley County.
Ancestral Homeland:, Scotland
Major occupation: ranching, farming. sheep rancher.

Mother's maiden name: Susie Monlux , born May 27, 1885, Spencer, S.D.
Date of Death Feb. 12, 1975 in Boise.
Married May 8, 1912 in Boise.
Ancestral Homeland: Ireland.
Housewife: Housewife, Mother, Ran the Methodist Church. She was on the cooking crew for MK when they dug the New York Canal. She knew the Morrisons.

What years were those?

Before 1912, - 1906 to 1912 It was before she was married.

Your children:

James D Bryce Aug 22, 1939 in Boise.

Carol Ann Bryce, June 21, 1941 in Boise.

Your career record:

Housewife for 46 years, school teacher for 37. All in Ada County, around Meridian - Blue Valley, Victory, Star, Meridian.

Where did you go to school:

I went to Victory Grade School, Meridian High School, Lewiston State College, College of Idaho.

Principle activities and interests other than livelihood:

Travelling, crafts, reading, volunteer work. - Just life in general.

I would like for you to tell us about some of the organizations you are affiliated with.

I have always been in the Idaho Education Association, National Education Society, Alpha Delta Kappa Teachers Sorority, United Methodist Church for 60 years, Locust Grove Grange, Pomona Grange, Meridian Historical Society.

Where do you do volunteer work:

St. Alphonsus Hospital - Red Cross

That's all the paper work. Now I guess we would just like you to talk to us about your memories of going to school here - grade school, high school, or programs.

We walked two miles to and from school every day, Sometimes it was terrible weather and they would take us in horse and buggy. A time or two I rode with a friend on a horse, but I got bucked off once and that was the end of that. I'm not very horsey.

We had Christmas programs and we would work about a week before stringing popcorn and cranberries to put on the Christmas tree. We all liked the Christmas programs, saying little verses and singing songs. That was a big deal. It was a two room school. I was only in the little room two years. I skipped a couple so that put me into the big room awfully early and I felt very out of place. Which I was. At noon we took our lunch buckets and would go sit someplace outside on the school grounds and eat. It was lots of fun to play on the merry go round because the big kids would push us little kids.

Then I went to Meridian High School 4 years. I played basketball and it was fun to watch the football games, but we didn't get to go to the stadiums. We were excused maybe at 3 o'clock to go stand around the football field and cheer. We never got out of school until the games were to start. Every year we had one class play - usually an operetta.

What are some of the operettas you did?

One I remember is "The Whole Town's Talking", I don't remember whether it was a play or an operetta, and I don't remember what it was all about.

How did the school facilities differ from the time you were a student at Victory and the time you taught there?

When I was a child going to Victory, we had an old furnace in the basement and I remember the teacher would send some of the big fellows down (they were as big as she was, and probably almost as old) to put coal in. Well, if it was winter, they would take several scoops of snow down and scoop into the furnace then all the smoke and steam would roll up and we'd have to go home. We couldn't stand that. I remember who one or two of them were.

When I taught there in 1934 we had two big pot bellied stoves, one in each room, and we had to do our own janitor work. I can still smell that oily floor. Remember how they put that oil on.

Was Victory on Ustick and Ten Mile?

Yes, where Eldon and Clysta Gray live.

We didn't have a telephone - this is sort of an amusing thing - Doris, the lady I was teaching with - her sister was expecting a baby and, of course, Doris didn't think she could wait until she got home, so Mrs. Hendrix was going to get the word from the hospital and then put a flag on one of the posts in the yard - one flag was a boy, two flags, a girl. So along about midmorning, Doris

looked out and there was one flag, David McFadden had been born. I will never forget that, but I thought it was a good use of the telephone.

Then I was married and stayed home for a few years to get a family started, and during the war they twisted your arm to get you back to teaching, so I went back to Blue Valley and I was there nine years. That was about the time reorganization was about to stir. When things were reorganized, I went to Star for six years and the principal down there was moving to Meridian, he asked me to go along and I'm so glad I did because I felt that was home.

Do you remember anything at the church? Did you go with your Mother when they cooked for the Sale Day?

You mean when they had the little stand at the sale yard? Oh, yes, I used to help serve. Oh, yes, we always went to Sunday School. I can still see those steps on the east going down into the basement - then after you got down, you had to walk a plank (well it was sort of a walk) into the main part. It was a big deal when they enlarged the building a little bit and built the concrete steps. I remember the old spongy walk that went into the old parsonage.

We always had special Children's Day programs. We always had a church and Sunday school picnic at Kirks Park in Nampa - that was so far away. Kirk's Park in Nampa is by NNC.

Do you remember any Christmas programs at the Church - was there a Santa Claus?

I don't remember Santa Claus coming to the Church or at Victory. We had Santa Claus at Blue Valley when I was teaching there. One time some of the big kids thought they'd give Santa a run so they chased him down the road - some of the big kids that weren't in school any more.

What about Halloween?

I don't remember anything special about Halloween. Usually when we went to school the day after Halloween we would have to remove things like - set up the toilet, and some of that sort of thing.

What businesses in town do you remember?

Oh, I remember Beam's Bakery That was a favorite place to go. It always smelled so good in there. And you always got a vanilla cone.

This is the first time we have had anyone mention a soda fountain type thing at the bakery. Do you remember the newstand in there, too?

Just a minute, I can tell you one thing - When we were in high school - for a pep rally (we didn't do like they do now days, but we thought it was a big deal) pool halls were no-no's and we would hold hands and the whole student body would go into the pool hall and out the other door. We used to think that

was really something, because the pool hall was a "no-no" with my family. The den of iniquity, really. But I got to see the inside that way.