

# THE MARIA ROGERS Oral History Program

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2009



## New Interviews

This issue describes **twenty-six new interviews** that have been added to the Maria Rogers Oral History Program collection, available at the Carnegie Branch Library and online.

**OH 1477.** In this recording, **Pat Gotchall** describes her friendship with Evelyn Wolcott, including descriptions of birding, mushroom and other wild plant collecting, and mountain climbing trips. Also discussed are Evelyn's extensive gardens, her beeyards, and of her as a knowledgeable teacher of practical skills and a person of great hospitality and spirituality. Audio recording by Roland and Jewel Wolcott.

**\*OH 1501.** **Joe Goldfield** helped expose the quantities of plutonium and contingent dangers he believed were concealed during Rocky Flats cleanup assessments. Joe died in 2002; much of this interview is with wife Roslyn Goldfield, though Joe's work remains the focus: Joe's education, advocacy, ethical determination, and lifetime efforts to create safe work conditions—Joe helped design the first HEPA filters for face masks. By LeRoy Moore. Transcribed by Cyns Nelson.

**\*OH 1502.** In 1958, **Ray Guyer** worked for Rocky Flats for 40 years, beginning in 1958. He describes numerous aspects of his work experience: facility security, conditions of secrecy, conditions of safety (or lack thereof), as well as the processing of liquid plutonium nitrate into plutonium "buttons." Ray was vociferously opposed to what he saw as intentional mishandling of inventory, waste material, and government documents. By LeRoy Moore. Transcribed by Eva Mesmer and Cyns Nelson.

**\*OH 1505.** **Ken Korkia** started working as a technical assistant to the Rocky Flats Cleanup Commission in 1990, and he later joined the Rocky Flats Citizens



**We recently completed a collection of ten interviews with long-time members of the First United Methodist Church in Boulder. The church will celebrate its 150th anniversary in November.**

Advisory Board. In this interview, Korkia details his contributions as an advocate for public participation in the cleanup process. He describes how citizens' voices and concerns were represented—or ignored—in budget priorities for Rocky Flats. By LeRoy Moore and Robert Del Tredici. Transcribed by Eva Mesmer and Cyns Nelson.

**\*OH 1511.** Biochemist **Niels Schonbeck** discusses the work of Edward Martell, who alerted the public to environmental radiation that came from activities and accidents at Rocky Flats. Martell

took soil-sample measurements after the '69 fire that he said demonstrated that plutonium was emitted from the plant. Schonbeck also explains correlations between radiation, cancer and aging; he also talks about a causal relationship between oxygen and aging, which has been a focus of his own study and writing. By Bob Del Tredici. Transcript by Eva Mesmer and Cyns Nelson.

## Visit Us: In Person or Online

⇒ Listen to and/or view any of our 1,600 interviews at the **Carnegie Branch Library for Local History** of the Boulder Public Library, 1125 Pine St., Boulder, CO 80302.

⇒ Visit our Web site: [www.boulderlibrary.org/oralhistory](http://www.boulderlibrary.org/oralhistory) to listen to our interviews online and read their summaries and transcripts.

⇒ Or search the Boulder Public Library's online catalog to find oral histories by topic: <http://www.boulderlibrary.org> (Click on "Find Books and More," then choose "Boulder Carnegie: Local History" for the scope of your search.)

**\*OH 1530.** In this interview **Daniel Ellsberg** explains his personal knowledge of U.S. military policy in general, and nuclear weapons in particular, which came to bear on his participation in the Rocky Flats sustained civil disobedience. He becomes emotional discussing the death of a close friend—attributed to radiation exposure—and correlates that loss with what transpired in 1978’s year-long occupation of the train tracks leading into Rocky Flats. He explores his recollection of how the blockade moved from a short symbolic action to one of extended protest. By LeRoy Moore. Transcribed by Eva Mesmer and Cyns Nelson.

**\*OH1531. Melinda Kassen** offers a nuanced picture of the Rocky Flats cleanup, balancing activist concerns against the political underpinnings of site restoration. Kassen became involved with Rocky Flats in 1986 as a lawyer with the Environmental Defense Fund. She later chaired the budget committee of the Colorado Council on Rocky Flats and, in 1993, became environmental counsel to the House Armed Services Committee. Ultimately she returned to Denver to work for Rocky Flats cleanup contractor Kaiser-Hill. In this interview Kassen shares her unique perspective as both “outside” agitator and “insider” during the Rocky Flats cleanup. By LeRoy Moore and Robert Del Tredici. Transcribed by Eva Mesmer and Cyns Nelson.

**\*OH 1532. Wes McKinley and Patty Calhoun** tag team as narrators in this recorded discussion about the Rocky Flats grand jury. The occasion for their dialogue is the 20th reunion of Rocky Flats activists. Wes describes how he came to be on the grand jury (serving as foreman), the grand jury’s role in criminal accusations against Rocky Flats contractors, and how the grand jury became embroiled in controversy. Patty Calhoun (*Westword* editor) fills gaps where Wes is unable to speak freely. Transcript by Eva Mesmer and Cyns Nelson.

**OH 1536. William Gross** began making trips to spend summers in Eldora with his family when he was only one year old in 1918. In these recordings (from 1983 and 2008), he describes life in Eldora; childhood adventures there; transportation to Boulder and Eldora; and roads, buildings, and stores in Boulder during the 1920s and 1930s. He also discusses his undergraduate years at the University of Colorado and some of the jobs he has held in the petroleum industry. Audio talk recorded by the narrator. Transcribed by Jo Walsh.

**OH 1549V. Robert (Bob) Bradfield** talks about his life in Boulder from the age of three in 1927. Topics include the Bradfield Lumber Company, his participation in the Rotary service club and his volunteer work as a scout master, what Boulder was like during the 1930s, and details of his military service during World War II. By Marvin B. Woolf and Steve Whitehead.

**OH 1552V. Mark Ruzzin**, mayor of Boulder from 2004-2007, focuses on his years of public service in Boulder, including his initial involvement with neighborhood issues in Boulder, as a member of the city’s planning board, as a city council member, and finally, mayor. Ruzzin stresses that as mayor, he strove for a collaborative, inclusive process in his relationships with other council members, city staff and the public at large. He recalls passage of the city’s Climate Action Plan and the process of using “sustainability filters” as major achievements. He also discusses the Transit Village, Valmont Butte, and the 29th St. Mall. Interviewed, filmed, and transcribed by Anne Marie Pois.

**OH 1553V.** Reflecting on four decades of life in Boulder, **Edith Stevens** discusses her work on political campaigns; as head of the Boulder County Democratic Party; on public affairs issues including those of housing development, districting, and open space management; and her work as an employment discrimination lawyer. By Marvin Woolf. Transcribed by Brian Van Way.

**OH 1554V. Phyllis Olson** moved temporarily to Boulder in 1959 and then settled here permanently in 1964. She discusses her membership in the First United Methodist Church, some of the issues and projects that the church has taken on, her position as president of the board of trustees in the 1970s, and her involvement in other Boulder organizations, including Historic Boulder and the Boulder Council for International Visitors. By Cyns Nelson. Filmed by Anne Marie Pois.

**\*The archiving of the interviews marked with an asterisk was made possible, in part, by a grant from Colorado Humanities, an affiliate of the National Endowment of the Humanities. The views, findings, and conclusions expressed in these interviews do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities or Colorado Humanities.**



**OH 1555V. Beth Hayward**, long time member of the First United Methodist Church and 50-year resident of Boulder, recalls her arrival in Boulder from Indiana, in the 1950s. She describes the Boulder of that time as a small university town and elaborates on life here in the 1950s and 1960s. Joining the First United Methodist Church was one of the first things she and her husband did upon their arrival, and Beth describes the growth of the church, its many activities, and her involvement with the church over the years. By Cyns Nelson. Filmed by Anne Marie Pois. Transcribed by Dee Baron.

**OH 1557V. Reading to End Racism** is a local group that helps children learn about and consider how to overcome racism by sending people to schools where they read books that deal with racism and lead discussions about the books as well as about the children's thoughts and experiences. In this interview, three founders of Reading to End Racism—**Ghada Elturk, Daniel Escalante, and Jean Gore**—talk about the origins of the group; the program's goals, methods and accomplishments; people and organizations that have helped the group grow; issues of social justice in Boulder County; and recommended books for facilitating learning about racism. By Anne Marie Pois. Transcribed by Sandy Grabowski.

**OH 1558V. Greg Lefferdink**, who served on the Boulder City Council from 1974 through 1981, talks about his election to council, the political climate in the city during the 1970s, people with whom he served, and many of the issues of the day with which the council dealt. Included in his discussion are the building of the Pearl Street Mall and Foothills Parkway, the rebuilding of Crossroads Mall and the issue of using the governmental right of condemnation to acquire land for urban renewal, the implementation of the Danish Plan to control growth, land use decisions such as the denial of a building permit to the Systems Development Corporation, and the disinclination of the Boulder public to approve the building of a performing arts' center. By Leland Rucker. Filmed by Timothy Plass.

**OH 1559V. Leslie Durgin** served as city council member and mayor of Boulder between 1989-1997. She was mayor during the building of the new NOAA facility, the JonBenét Ramsey murder, and the creation of the Youth Advisory Board. She discusses her interest in health and human services and her desire to give a voice to underrepresented groups in Boulder. She talks about

the controversy surrounding her appointment, how she viewed the role of the mayor and the operation of the city government, and how these things have changed over the years. By Leland Rucker. Filmed by Timothy Plass. Transcribed by Kristen Jorden.

**OH 1561V.** In this wide-ranging interview, **William Arndt** discusses many aspects of the history and functioning of the First United Methodist Church of Boulder, especially the church's music programs, architectural history, and sense of community. He describes the upheaval that the congregation experienced over the issue of gay orientation for pastors during the 1970s and its eventual decision to become a "reconciling congregation." He also offers recollections of the social and political upheaval that Boulder experienced during the 1960s. Finally, the interview details his own family history, including memories of his mother, Arlyne Arndt, (see OH 1132V A-B). By Cyns Nelson. Filmed by Anne Marie Pois.

**OH 1565.** In an interview that is full of detailed and colorful stories, **Evonne Damiana** describes a life that included traveling from California to Colorado alone by bus at the age of six, living on a farm for part of her childhood, working as a telephone operator after World War II, and raising a family in Louisville. She tells about what was involved in raising 300 chickens a year on a farm; food grown, eaten and preserved on the farm; other aspects of farm life in the 1930s; men who traveled on freight trains during the Depression; coal mining in Boulder County; and her husband's job as one of the first employees of the National Bureau of Standards in Boulder. By Gerald Caplan.

**OH 1566V. Dale Shreve** is one of the planners and architects who was involved in designing the layout of, and houses in, the Table Mesa subdivision in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In addition, he has lived in the neighborhood for the past five decades. In this interview, he describes not only the process of creating Table Mesa, but also discusses the social aspects of life in the neighborhood, some of the other designers and builders in the area at that time, and the role of FHA in building subdivisions. By Timothy Plass. Filmed by Leland Rucker.

**OH 1570V. Louise Adams** moved to the then-new Martin Acres subdivision in 1955. She describes living there in the '50s and '60s while raising a family, including the affordability and social make-up of the neighborhood;

nearby stores, parks and schools; initial landscaping; and the neighborhood compared to other areas of Boulder. Interviewed and transcribed by Diane Rabson. Filmed by Timothy Plass.

**OH 1573. Helen Korn** grew up on a ranch in the San Luis Valley in the 1930s and 1940s and subsequently lived in Colorado Springs, Denver, and California. In 1966, she moved to Boulder. She and her husband bought a house in the then-new Table Mesa neighborhood, where she has lived ever since. In this interview, she talks about growing up in rural Colorado and about raising a family in and being part of the community of the Table Mesa neighborhood during the 1960s to 1980s. By Timothy Plass. Transcribed by Brian Van Way.

**OH 1574V. Ginny Wells** has been deeply involved in the life of the First United Methodist Church in Boulder since 1960. She has been a member and chairperson of United Methodist Women and of the Board of Trustees, business manager, membership secretary, and church historian helping to plan the activities for the church's sesquicentennial celebration in 2009. In this interview, she talks about women's groups, community outreach, controversial issues with which the church has grappled, church renovations, the Theologian in Residence Program, the church music program, the church's place in the larger community and sesquicentennial activities planned. By Anne Marie Pois. Filmed by Anne Marie Pois and Sue Brighton.

**OH 1576V. Mary and Ed Wolff** were involved with Walter Orr Roberts and I.M. Pei in bringing the Mesa Lab of NCAR (National Center for Atmospheric Research) to life. They discuss this project from the time it was just a vision for a unique laboratory enabling collaborative interdisciplinary scientific research, to working with its architect I.M. Pei, to its completion. They describe challenges of design and construction as well as dealing with choice of a site, a director, and interactions with the city, state and federal governments. They talk about some of the ways the building did not live up to expectations and the many ways it demonstrated symbolic and practical scientific value. By Shirley Steele. Filmed by Liz McCutcheon. Transcribed by Shirley Steele.

**OH 1579. Margaret Bowdey** has lived in Boulder since 1957. She talks about raising four children in Boulder and the central place that the First United Methodist

Church has played in her life. She describes the extensive choir program at the church, teaching Sunday school, participating in the Adult Forum and Reading Circle programs, and her pride in having the church become a Reconciling Congregation that fully accepts gay people into its community. By Anne Marie Pois. Filmed by Anne Marie Pois and Sue Brighton.

**OH 1580V. Chuck Mosser** talks about how he came to live in Boulder and become a part of Boulder's First United Methodist Church. He describes the extensive domestic and international relief work done by BUMMP (Boulder United Methodist Mission Partners) and UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief), and his work with those organizations. He also talks about the importance of the music program in his life and the history of the First United Methodist organ. By Anne Marie Pois. Filmed by Anne Marie Pois and Sue Brighton.

## Explore our Latest Special Collections

- **The Industrial Mine collection**, with 14 interviews about growing up in the Industrial Mine Camp near Superior.
- **The First United Methodist Church collection**, with 10 interviews about the history of the church, which celebrates its 150th anniversary this year.

**Next volunteer meetings:  
November 7, December 5  
and January 23**

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