

Dr. Radke Women's Oral History Collection

## DeAnna Dinsdale

By DeAnna Dinsdale

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## Box 1 Folder 9

Oral Interview conducted by Maren Miyasaki

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Brigham Young University- Idaho

Maren Miyasaki: Alright, this is Maren Miyasaki interviewing DeAnna Dinsdale on September 23, 2004. Okay, first of all when did you move into the Idaho area? Were you born here or...?

DeAnna Dinsdale: I was born here.

MM: Were you born in Rigby?

DD: In Rigby.

MM: When were you born?

DD: February 26, 1937.

MM: Okay, what are some traditions you remember growing up as a child?

DD: I remember playing games, playing hide and seek, Antie I over, going to a friend's house on Sunday afternoons with my parents visiting.

MM: Do you have any traditions that happened to do with maybe holidays, or Sunday, or anything like that?

DD: That was what I was talking about, on Sundays.

MM: Oh okay. Are there any family traditions, or any holiday ones you'd do?

DD: That I did as a child?

MM: Uh-hum.

DD: Okay, I don't know, anything about Christmas, except we went after a Christmas tree, having a real Christmas tree, making crepe paper, not crepe paper, but construction, what do I want to call them?

MM: Chains.

DD: Chains. My mother died when I was thirteen so that kind of changed a lot of traditions in our home.

MM: How did it change?

DD: Oh, it makes a difference. When my father remarried when I was sixteen so, we had a new family, a new combining of families, so it changes the traditions.

MM: Did you have neighbors close by?

DD: I did.

MM: What do you remember about them?

DD: I had two neighbors that took over, and kind of raised me. One as Alice Bush, and she was one that taught me how to sew, and was there for me, and made me a formal after mother died. And, probably May Lee on the other side that just included me in a lot of her things that they did as a family. So I was the last child at home.

MM: So you didn't move around a lot as a child, did you?

DD: We actually did. We lived out in Washington from the time I was four, and we came back when I was nine because of the war. My dad worked on the Bonneville Dam, and then both my parents worked in the Vancouver shipyards during the Second World War.

MM: Okay. What are some of your earliest memories as [a] child? Do you have any interesting ones?

DD: You mean the youngest, the earliest that I remember? I don't know. I think about... We just had a normal life. Where we lived the canal was close behind our house, and we spent summers in the canal, and winters sleigh riding, and doing things like that.

MM: Okay. What do you remember about elementary school?

DD: It was here in Rigby. I liked school. I guess one thing that I really liked about school was Mr. Kinghorn was our principal, and he taught us how to dance. We learned ballroom dancing when we were in fifth and sixth grade, and I've enjoyed that all my life.

MM: That's interesting. Is there anything else that you remember about high school that was significant?

DD: I liked high school. I was involved in most things: in pep club, and home economics, and we had Sigma Etta Ki, which was a service organization that I served as president of my senior year. I was on student council.

MM: You were very involved.

DD: I was very involved in high school. I liked, we had fun. We had pep club, so you belonged to several organizations, really.

MM: What were some, what were some of your hobbies while you were in high school?

DD: I learned how to sew, and I sewed for my nieces and nephews, and so Home Ec. was one. I liked what? I don't know. I don't really have music training, but I sang with the choruses.

MM: Do you remember any interesting vacations or outings you had with your family or with your friends even?

DD: Yeah, we went to Sun Valley a couple of times as a church group. We earned our way by attendance, and by saving our own money to pay for our way, and so they took us on these special trips, and that was fun. We went to new places, but we didn't normally travel a lot. If we traveled it would be to go to Utah where our relatives were, and they would come up this way, and stay with us when they were on their way to Yellowstone Park. We didn't take vacations and go stay in motels or anything like that.

MM: Do you remember having any callings at church while you were growing up, anything?

DD: Uh-huh, I started, I was secretary in the Junior Sunday School at that time when I was younger in church. That office was in young women's, in what we called mutual. We danced in the dance festivals, were in road shows, and we had a lot of activities like that.

MM: Okay.

DD: It's interesting.

MM: You didn't serve a full-time mission was it...?

DD: No. I have not.

MM: Did you attend college?

DD: I did.

MM: Where did you go?

DD: To Rick's College.

MM: To Rick's College. How long were you there?

DD: A year and a half. I went one full year, and part of another one, and got married.

MM: You got married, so you didn't get your associates or get any...?

DD: No, I did not finish that.

MM: Have you had any career, any jobs career wise or...?

DD: Not really. I worked for a short time after we were married, but most [of] the time it's been a homemaker. I put to use my home-making. I was majoring in home economics, so I put to use a lot that I learned in college.

MM: That's good.

DD: I've upholstered furniture, and made drapes, and done a lot of home-making skills.

MM: Tell me how you met your husband.

DD: We met at Rick's college at dance. He's from Rigby and I'm from Rigby, but we really had never dated. He had been in the service for a short time, and came home, and that was when we started dating.

MM: That's interesting. Is there nay advice that you would give to students our age, or people getting married and starting families? What was it like for you?

DD: We didn't have a lot. I mean kids these days expect an awfully lot. I guess working together, and not wanting or expecting too much. Is it working? We have a nice home and thing now, but when we were first married we started out with not much. We had only a willingness to work, and to make do, and I made most of my children's clothes, and cooked meals, and canned. I started canning when I first got married and raising gardens. We have all of our married life really. We had opportunity to be satisfied with what you have, and work together you know to accomplish things, not expect somebody else to hand it out to you.

MM: This is going kind of on to the church. Which apostles and prophets do you remember growing up?

DD: President McKay was prophet for so many of the years when I was young, I don't, that's about as far back as you know, I remember, and all the others since then, the current prophets on.

MM: Did you meet any apostles or prophets during your life?

DD: Not really, we haven't had the opportunity.

MM: How do you feel the church has changed with your life time? How has it changed from what it was when you were growing up to now?

DD: Well, I guess it's worldwide, and the abundance of temples, and that. It's amazing, I guess the growth of the church, and, the many opportunities there are. The difference in, you know, even in Rick's College. It has changed so much since I went there. As we go to musical performances or plays, or things like this, the physical facilities that they have there are amazing, and so professional and—

MM: The military question, did you, or anyone in your immediate family serve in any of the military?

DD: My husband did. Yes, he did.

MM: Where did he serve?

DD: He was here in the United States. He was an MP in 19 what, the year before we married. His parents' home burned down, and so he returned home to help them move their farm, and to

rebuild their home so. That's probably the reason we got together, instead of him having a military career.

MM: He came home.

DD: Yeah, he did.

MM: How old were you on December 7, 1941 when Pearl Harbor happened?

DD: How what?

MM: How old?

DD: Well, I was about ten years old. No you're saying '41, duh, I was thinking December 7. I was four years old.

MM: Four years old, so, do you remember very much about that day, or the war?

DD: No I don't. Of course I don't, no. That was the time that we moved out to Washington, and then it was after that time that my parents worked at the shipyard, and I had a brother, an older brother that when he was seventeen went into the Marines and that. So I was involved that way.

MM: Okay.

DD: Yeah, I was pretty young.

MM: How did your families cope with it? Did it affect your life very much?

DD: Well, like I said my parents worked at the shipyards and then we left out home here, and just lived in a little rental house out there because there were jobs available near there. And I think everyone sacrificed at that time, there wasn't abundance of things, and there was rationing and my parents were, well ambitious, and provided the necessities of life for us, but we didn't have a lot of luxuries. In fact, we lived a pretty simple life, but there was a branch of the Church out in Washington that we attended, and we had a lot of friends there, and did fun pot luck dinners, and had a fun association with those people. We were in the mission field, so we were involved with lady missionaries and things [like] that. I'm thinking we had mostly lady missionaries that came and served at that time in our area. So—

MM: That's interesting.

DD: Yeah.

MM: What do you remember about the Vietnam and the Korean War?

DD: Well, I had another brother that went to Korea. So we were involved that way. I wasn't as involved with Vietnam, but I had a brother that served in Korea, that was about the time that my mother died, so my world was kind of turned upside down at that time.

MM: How did the Great Depression affect your family? Was that a big issue?

DD: They (her family) moved around. They were in Arizona, and it was just before that the time you know in my childhood that there was the Great Depression, so they moved around. They worked down in Arizona, I think they went down there to find work, and my older sister was killed down there about, during that time, so they didn't have much. They came back, and built a home here in Rigby themselves. You know, with a lot of their own labor, and then they left it after they got it done to go out to Washington to work, and use that money to help pay off that loan that wasn't a great deal of money, but they didn't have very much at that time either.

MM: So how did it affect the area, was it different coming from Washington or Idaho?

DD: I was young enough that it really didn't affect my life as much, as say my older sister who said she you know remembers asking dad for ten cents to go to a—they called them lyceums at the high school, which as a special program that was brought in, you know, like assemblies. And that, remembering dad saying he didn't have the ten cents to give her that so, but she's ten years older than I am, and I was younger, and it didn't affect me as much. I think that we had a cow, and so we produced our own milk. We had a garden, and we raised pigs, and I remember them, you know, butchering pigs, and curing hams, and we raised chickens, and so we raised a lot of our own products, you know right here in Rigby on Second North Street. That would have been when I was nine or so right after the Depression, but still, we just weren't that high [financially].

MM: Interesting, so do you remember anything interesting about the cutbacks, shortages, or warrants at the time?

DD: Repeat your question again.

MM: Sorry. Do you remember anything interesting about the cutbacks, or the shortages, or the warrants that they used? Was there anything?

DD: (Laughing) Not really.

MM: Where were you when the Teton Dam broke?

DD: (Laughing) I was up here painting my mother-in-law's house, and I just kept painting that day. (Laughing) I thought I better get the cupboards painted. I had a son in Rexburg with my sister, and they went up on the hill, and our kids were later able to drive around and through, I guess probably up by Heise, and up over the dry farms, and brought Robert back home that night. In fact, I had my sister in Rexburg and it affected his sister out here by the Snake River out in Annis I remember (Laughing).

MM: How old were you?

DD: I was married. I mean that's '76 (laughing).

MM: Okay.

DD: I mean we were married in '57, so we'd been married for twenty years, nineteen years.

MM: So did it affect your immediate family mostly?

DD: Definitely my immediate family, oh, you mean our family.

MM: Yeah.

DD: Well, we spent a lot of [time] helping them to clean up, and fix up the best we could. You know, there was my sister, they cleaned out their house, and fixed it up again. They didn't, his sister's house was torn down, and they built a new home where it was. Yeah, it affected us.

MM: How did it affect the area, do you think?

DD: I don't know (laughing).

MM: Sort of the same kind of stuff.

DD: Yeah.

MM: What were some influential businesses you think in the area that have affected the community?

DD: Affected them how, what?

MM: Just helped the economy, or provided jobs.

DD: I don't know. My husband worked out at the test site, and I mean it provided us with a very good job, and insurance, and things like that, it changed somewhat since he was out there. The college is changing things in Rexburg as it's grown, and that. I think some of the big businesses have what, taken over for the small businesses that we used to have growing up. It's just change, but—

MM: What do you remember about Rick's College because we've talked about that?

DD: What do I remember about it? Let's see I worked in the College Bookstore, and I was a Vikadette, one of the twirlers for the Vikadette, and I belonged to Sigma Etta Ki, not Sigma Etta Ki, but Valkyries. Sigma Etta Ki was in high school, the Valkyries in college, so I was involved with that.

MM: What did they do?

DD: They're a service organization I guess. Do they not have Valkyries up there any more? I didn't realize that. Yeah, we were just a service organization that had projects, you know around campus and...

MM: They've got some service ones, probably just with different names.

DD: I didn't realize that they didn't have the Valkyries up there anymore.

MM: It's BYU-Idaho now, so it's a little bit different.

DD: Well, it's been awhile.

MM: Do you remember anything about Ricks' changes? I know it's gone through lots of stages like when Ricks College was the academy.

DD: Oh, heaven's no. I'm not that old.

MM: I know it was a four year college for a little while then it changed back?

DD: Now it changed back about the time that I attended Rick's College; it was only a two year when I was going there, so it was just before that time that it had been a four year college.

MM: Do you remember any of the debate surrounding the moving of Rick's College to Idaho Falls?

DD: Yes, I do, and I didn't want them to move it. I still think it's in the right place. I like Rexburg I think it's a good place for a small college. It's getting bigger.

MM: It is getting bigger.

DD: It is getting bigger. I like, I really liked the spirit around Rick's when I went there.

MM: Do you remember when President McKay's built the Kirkham? Didn't that signify that Rick's College was going to stay in Rexburg permanently?

DD: I don't know that. I remember when the Kirkham was built. Yeah, yeah I do, which would have been about that time that I was attending there. I don't remember the exact year that it was built. Do you have that on your—because I attended in '56 and '57 so.

MM: Okay. How do you think the tourism around this area has affected it, like with Ricks, or up in Jackson where we're so close to Yellowstone, and all that? Did it affect this area at all?

DD: Oh, it, I'm sure it does. Now it seems to be the big business, tourists. People, we get around a lot. We travel a lot more than I ever did as a child. I mean I never dreamed I'd go some of the places I've gone.

MM: Where, where have you gone?

DD: Like Hawaii, Mexico, Florida, some of these places, you know it wasn't, it wasn't that available when I was a child.

MM: How about the snow birds, have you had any snow birds in this area, or is that basically a Rexburg kind of thing, Snowbirds coming?

DD: You mean in Rigby.

MM: Uh-huh.

DD: Not that I know of, no mostly up in Rexburg, I don't know, did they come as much this last summer? They have kind of slowed down.

MM: They slowed down, but they're still coming.

DD: They're using the apartments for students year round pretty much, but evidently there's an excess of apartments up there now isn't there?

MM: Yeah, there's a lot of married housing, and not quite as many people married. I haven't really asked about your family. How many, how many children do you have?

DD: I have five.

MM: You have five.

DD: Four boys and a girl.

MM: Is there anything...?

DD: And I come from a family of six.

MM: Okay. Let's see, anything we missed? I try to get to the main questions first. What was your major in college, did you say it was homemaking?

DD: Home Economics, yeah.

MM: What did you, what made you want to do that major?

DD: Oh, I guess because I like to sew and I like to cook, and I just was always involved. I took a lot of Home Ec. classes in high school, and was involved in that. I've just always loved to sew, and do home making skills much more than secretarial. I learned to use the computer and things, and I typed and that, but that wasn't something I was as interested in or as good at.

MM: Do you have some experience in that, or just because everyone else was doing secretarial kind of things?

DD: Well, you take classes in high school. I took short hand and I took typing, and which I'm glad for, you know because you use it with the computer, and that. I don't know. You just did.

MM: Is there anything different you would have done different in college?

DD: No, not really, I could have gone on and finished, but my husband and I both agreed that I'd stay home with the children, and I worked hard in the home. I've done a lot of things to save us money. I paint, and upholster, and cook, and sew, and can, and do all those things which I feel are important as a homemaker.

MM: Okay. Is there, do your children live in this area, or did they, have they moved all over the place?

DD: Three of our sons are in Utah, they're all three engineers because the jobs are more plentiful there than they are here. Our daughter's in Boise, her husband is a dentist, and they chose to go there because the size of the community and opportunities. We have one son that lives with us; he was injured in a car train accident twenty years ago.

MM: How did that happen?

DD: Just crossing the railroad tracks, and got hit by a train, didn't see it. So he has some paralysis and things like that.

MM: Interesting, is there any other big events that you, that affected your life here, you think anything? Anything I'm trying to think that I haven't asked about like the Great Depression?

DD: Not really, I guess it affected all people because of the difference in the way our parents thought, because our parents were pretty conservative. You know they lived through that so they didn't go into debt like people are going into debt now. They paid for what they got they were honest and hardworking, and didn't expect, I think as much as younger people and older people today expect. I worry about the debt in our country, and that we've been warned. We've been through a depression, and it makes you wonder if it can happen again.

MM: Did things on a national level, like the JFK (John F. Kennedy) assassination or anything like that affect you?

DD: Yeah, I remember that distinctly. It was very shocking to have someone shoot your president, and things like that. I don't know, I guess because of the gospel, we don't panic over things like this. I mean because there's an eternal plan, and so we go on, and live our lives. It's distressing to me the vulgarity and the lack of morals of people in our day and age. It's distressing to me what comes on TV, you know. We'd like to live the kind of life we lived as a child without having that garbage, you know seeing stuff like this constantly, and that you want the same things for your children and your grandchildren, good sane living, moral, honest,

upright. That distresses me, I hate to see the war in Iraq, and it's with mixed feelings, but I would like to see those people enjoy freedom like we've been able to enjoy.

MM: I haven't asked a lot, but when you were growing up what did your parents do?

DD: My father was a carpenter for as long as he could do it, he had a crippled ankle and a knee that got hurt, and so later on he was a janitor for the state highway department and mother worked off and on. She worked a little bit out in Washington out in the shipyards, at a cafeteria, and then she had worked the pea house sorting, you know in the seed house a little bit. As I said mother died at '45, when I was thirteen so didn't really know. She was a homemaker primarily, took care of our home. You know it wasn't so common to work outside the home when I was growing up. Fathers and husbands went out to work and mothers stayed home, managed and provided food. You know Mother always canned, and made bread, and made meals from scratch, and managed the money dad brought home.

MM: We didn't talk a lot about school, but do you think the schools you went to were a lot different than the schools we go to?

DD: I don't know. I think, I guess there's a lot of emphasis on sports and extra curricular activities, and one thing that I see that bothers me is the disregard for teachers, and for principals. And we always respected, and I guess had a little bit of fear. We weren't disrespectful to our teachers or our principals. It seems that teachers had more control over classes. I remember one time that I went for a Labor Day weekend, and I was gone an extra day, and I had a note from my parents that I could go and went with a friend on a little trip with her family. When I come back two of my teachers said I sloughed, and I had permission from my parents, written permission to go and that, so they docked me on my grades because of that one day, because I'd sloughed. I don't know about today, but I don't think they're that strict.

MM: Probably not.

DD: In that day, they seriously were cutting a whole grade like from a 'B' to a 'C+' or something like this. They were cutting that much from my grade for one day, and I had permission, I went back and argued it, and went back to the principal saying I had permission from my parents, but that was the discipline you know that we had then that I don't think they have today, do you?

MM: No, but I don't think I ever sloughed, so I don't think I ever had this problem.

DD: To me that was not a slough, I mean I did not just leave school, you know I had permission to go, like going on a trip, which I'm sure you've probably gone on a trip. But no, I didn't just slough school. I was very conscientious about school and about my grades.

MM: Did you have any teachers that you really liked?

DD: Oh, yeah, I had a lot of teachers that I liked, and some that I didn't care for as much. I got along, got along well with my principal, and things like that. He gave me a special award for being service minded, serving other people so.

MM: That's neat.

DD: We had respect for them, they were our teachers, I don't know. There wasn't foul language, and that's one thing that really distresses me the lack of respect in the hallways, and respect for their bodies, and respect for the way they dress and the way they act in school.

MM: Was your school very far away, or was it close?

DD: Yeah, right in the middle of town we have a high school right there.

MM: Did you walk?

DD: Uh-huh, I did. Some drove because, you know there were kids living on the outlying areas, and the farms that drove, but we didn't have a car. I worked up in West Yellowstone summers when I was still high school and after high school, and I didn't have a car up there. My dad would drive me up, and leave me, and I walked to work, and I stayed up there 'til someone came to pick me up or something. It was [a] good summer job. I made money for college and that, so we just did things like that, we were independent.

MM: Okay. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

DD: I don't know what else you want, just what it's like in the good old days?

MM: That's what we're asking, what was it like in Idaho and around this area?

DD: It's was just, I mean, I guess more simple living. You know, we didn't, I don't know, we weren't too busy to go to Mutual night, the kids usually all came. We didn't have so many activities then, you know. We weren't so involved in team sports and all this all summer. So our lives were probably simpler than it is now. They have soccer, and football, and dance, and gymnastics, and tennis for four and five year olds, and, yeah they fill life so full of things that you are so busy. So it was more laid back.

MM: Do you think it was a lot more laid back when you went to college, too?

DD: Not necessarily, yeah I was always involved in things, and I like that. I mean I was always involved in high school, decorated for dances, and going to games, basketball and football and everything. I think students need to have something to do. How has that intramural sports worked up at BYU-Idaho, do the kids get involved?

MM: Yeah, that's probably interesting you would think less people would be involved, but more people are probably involved now, because they have so many teams and so many sports that

they do from like the basic ones, like football and basketball, but like to Frisbee, ultimate Frisbee or hockey. For almost any sport you have you can find a team, and play on it.

DD: That's good. That's better than sitting on the sidelines clapping for a few, isn't it? That's you know, we were involved, so I think the programs are really good, I thought it was a good idea. The more you're involved the more exercise you get.

MM: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

DD: Pardon?

MM: Anything else?

DD: I don't know, not that I know of, I'm not very interesting.