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### Oral History Interview: Barbara Doherty

Barbara Doherty

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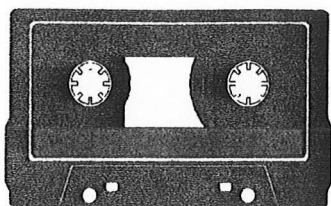
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**ORAL HISTORY OF APPALACHIA PROGRAM**

**MARSHALL UNIVERSITY**

**AN ORAL INTERVIEW WITH: BARBARA DOHERTY**

**CONDUCTED BY: ROBERT D. SAWREY, PH.D.**

**DATE OF INTERVIEW: DECEMBER 11, 1987**

**TRANSCRIPTIONIST/TYPIST: GINA KEHALI KATES**



**Robert:** This is Bob Sawrey. Today I'll be interviewing Barbara Doherty, D-o-h-e-r-t-y, who worked at the Marshall University Library for seventeen years. Today's date is December 11th, 1987. The interview will be in Mrs. Doherty's home on Crestmont Drive in Huntington.

**Barbara:** Or the little gray-haired lady.

**Robert:** I'll stick with Barbara. Okay. Barbara, let's begin by going back to where you were born, which was...?

**Barbara:** Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1917. Actually, in a little town outside of Pittsburgh, Thornburg, a little residential section.

**Robert:** How do you spell that?

**Barbara:** Thornburg?

**Robert:** Thornburg.

**Barbara:** Thornburg, one word. T-h-o-r-n-b-u-r-g (okay) just a little, small residential...only about sixty-five houses. Right outside of Pittsburgh.

**Robert:** Were you born in the hospital?

**Barbara:** Noo, no, eighth of nine children. Picture of the house sitting over there [pointing to a picture]. (oh, my) Mother and



**Dad were married in 1903. They were both from Pittsburgh. My mother had gone to Vassar, graduated from Vassar in I think, 1896. And then she taught in Pittsburgh and saved her money and went to Oxford for a year, I think in '98. And did her work for her master's. But of course, Oxford wouldn't confer a degree on a woman in those days. So they made some kind of a deal with Vassar. And Vassar gave Mother the master's degree when she came back.**

**Robert: What was her name?**

**Barbara: McCloskey. Estelle McCloskey. (Estelle?) Estelle, uh-huh.**

**Robert: How do you spell the first name?**

**Barbara: E-s-t-e-l-l-e. (okay) McCloskey. And her father, who was a superintendent at J & L Mill, but he didn't approve of women's education. So she just had to do all this on her own. So anyhow, she got her degree and then taught some more in Pittsburgh, at Ms. Thurston's, which was a finishing school for girls. And then she took two daughters of a wealthy Pittsburgh**

**family to Paris for a year. And they lived up the same river and she took them by boat down the Seine every day to the Sorbonne and all this stuff, and traveled all around Europe all by herself. When she was at Oxford she traveled everywhere, alone. And you know, in 1897, -98.... One way she made money was to write articles for the Pittsburgh paper. I have some of those; they're fascinating. And anyhow, eventually, she came, they came, she came back to Pittsburgh and all this time she and Dad were engaged. And Dad was a newspaper man in Pittsburgh, and then he switched to real estate. And they were married in 1903 and started to build that house out in Thornburgh. And they went to Europe for three months on their wedding trip. And while they were gone, there was a market crash and he lost all his money. So they came back and settled there. And they lived there, they hadn't....with nine children.**

**Robert: Let me interrupt for just one second. We haven't established his name yet.**

**Barbara: Albert C. Daschbach. (spell Dashbach)**

**D-a-s-c-h-b-a-c-h. (oh, just a good German name) Mmm-hmm.**

**They were from. He was 3/4 Irish. His mother and two grandmothers were from Ireland, Curry. I can't think of the other one. Anyhow, he and Mother went to Europe on their wedding trip. We got a wonderful letter from them that I went to one of my brother's and he kept it. But Mother got violently seasick every time she got on a boat. She was in the cabin, and they were coming in to Ireland, my dad wrote this, he said, "I stood on the deck and watched the shore of Ireland come up, and I said to myself, I can just see it, 10,000 Irishman saying, "Welcome, Daschbach, to your native soil." He was a great guy.**

**So...anyhow, they got married and lived in Thornburg then, oh, the rest of their lives. Mother died in 1935 and Dad died in 1960. And they raised the nine children in the one house. And all but one of them went through college, all through The Depression and all that stuff.**

**Robert: How did your Mother die?**

**Barbara: Of a heart attack.**

**Robert: She was fiftyish then?**

**Barbara: Sixty. (she was...) Sixty, sixty-two.**

**Robert: So your father lived to be quite old.**

**Barbara: Yes, and he was...eighty-seven, I think, something like that.**

**Robert: All right. Now you were living out in what we might call today Suburbia, or even Exurbia Nor some such.... Where did you go to primary school and that type of thing?**

**Barbara: This tiny little school in Thornburg. We had a little private, well, it was a public school. But I was in the largest class that ever graduated, and there were eleven of us.**

**Robert: Now this was high school?**

**Barbara: No, no, this is grade school. (okay, grade school) And this was right in the little town. Then for high school we went over to Crafton High Public High School. Thornburg is right outside of Crafton. It's on the road to the airport, the old road to the airport, if you know Pittsburgh.**

**Robert: I know how to get there, and no, I wouldn't know how to**

get there. I don't know how you would have gotten there in the '30's.

**Barbara:** So we all went to Crafton High. And then Mother died in '35 and I was, that's when I was graduating from high school. And I went to college at St. Mary's of the Woods, out of Terre Haute, Indiana.

**Robert:** How did you ever end up there?

**Barbara:** Well, my two older sisters had gone there.

**Robert:** Then let's back it up. How did they get there?

**Barbara:** Oh, through friends. Mother had a good friend who was a nun in the Sisters of Providence order. And something to do with Erie, Pennsylvania, I can't remember. But anyway, it was through her that Rosie went. Mother had taught all the older ones, see, so that all my older brothers and sisters went to, were ready for college when they were like 14 1/2, 15 years old. And my oldest sister, Rosemary, went to St. Mary's when she was barely 15. Which they always, always said was a mistake. But Mother was a brilliant...a great teacher. She used

to tutor all the kids in town for the college boards, for Princeton and Yale and all that kind of....

**Robert:** So, does it follow that you were and are Catholic?

**Barbara:** Oh, sure, sure, the whole family.

**Robert:** Okay. And then you went to college. What did you study at...? (St. Mary of the Woods) Is that still in existence?

**Barbara:** Yes. Still a woman's college, doing very well. One of the few left.

**Robert:** Yes, they're becoming fewer, aren't they?

**Barbara:** Unh-huh. And I went there three years. And then Dad retired and I couldn't go back. I had...had a scholarship and everything. But I still couldn't make it. So...I was the eighth of nine. So I went to PCW, Pennsylvania College for Women, which is now Chatham. And finished my senior year at Chatham in '39. And then I went to Carnegie Library School, which is now Pitt, Pittsburgh Library School, University of Pittsburgh.

**Robert:** What did you major in for your undergraduate degree?

**Barbara:** History. (okay) And I think...(did immediately...?) I had a

**couple of other majors.**

**Robert: But immediately you decided to go to library school?**

**Barbara: Well, I'd always said I wanted to be a librarian. (oh, okay) From the time we were doing this vocational scrapbooks.**

**Partly Mother's influence. [clears throat]**

**So then we uh...let's see...that was '39 and '40. Forty I graduated from Carnegie Library School, which was in the old, in the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, up in, you know, the big museum place. And Mr. Munn, Ralph Munn, was the director of the Carnegie Library. And he was a good friend of my father's, and partly through that and partly you know, my ability and everything, I got a job with Carnegie Library. So I worked over on the Pittsburgh Southside branch, worked in Carnegie Library, down in the mill district.**

**Robert: Oh, okay.**

**Barbara: You don't know Pittsburgh at all?**

**Robert: I know...some of this I'm familiar with, but not all of it.**

**But I don't know where you're talking about now.**

**Barbara: J & L Mills, which is now shut down. But I worked there for three years. And then they opened a downtown branch. And I got transferred over to the new business, no, it wasn't business, just the downtown branch of the public library, over on Oliver Street, right across from the William Penn.**

**Robert: Oh, I've been there. I know where you are now. Okay.**

**Barbara: And uh...I was the assistant there. And I can't remember now how long.... But anyhow, I got married in '44, so I wasn't, I was only there about a year.**

**Robert: Well, let's bring the husband in to the story a little bit.**

**(my husband?) Yes. (Oh...) How did this all fit together?**

**Barbara: Well, he was in Pittsburgh, he's from Bangor, Maine, originally. And he worked for <sup>L</sup>opper's company. Eastern Gas and Fuel, which was a subsidiary of <sup>L</sup>Copper's. I don't know whether that is now or not. (okay) And uh, he was a friend of a friend. And I met him and we got married in February of 1944, and moved to St. Louis. (with his company?) Yeah. (okay) I think that was Eastern Gas and Fuel at that point. And then we, he**



was trans-, that was temporary out there. Then he was transferred back to Pittsburgh, and we were there for six or eight months. And then he took a job with Synthetic Fuels Program in Washington. He was the assistant director of the original Synthetic Fuels Program.

**Robert:** This is still late in the war, or is the war over?

**Barbara:** No, no, no, yeah, '44, we went to... '45, January '45 we went to Washington. And they were, you know, working hard on that synthetic fuel at that point. And he was sent to Germany and liberated a fuels plant right after the war. And they brought it all back and set it all up out in Missouri, or something.

Anyhow, then when Ike was president, they canceled the whole thing. So then he took a position with Island Creek Coal and that's how we got to Huntington, in 1953. And it was quite a change, to move here from Washington, D.C. But I'm glad we did.

**Robert:** Okay, now, what happens in between '53 and when you joined...?

**Barbara: Sixty-seven? ('67) Well, we had three boys. (okay)**

**Three adopted sons. Dan, and twins, we adopted in Washington, and we came here the twins were four and Danny was six.**

**Danny was in first grade. And I was a housekeeper, a mother and what do they call them? Mother and a house maker, what do they call them? Homemaker.**

**Robert: Homemaker. And then when they were finished with (grade school) school and home...**

**Barbara: Grade school and high school, and were...we got them...let's see, where was Dan? I guess he had joined the Air Force. Anyhow, the twins were freshmen in college. They were going to Wheeling College. And took 'em up, got 'em all settled, came home, it was Labor Day weekend. And this Mrs. Bobbitt called Tuesday morning and wanted to know if I would be interested in coming down and helping them out for six months. So I said, "Sure." So I went down and was there for seventeen years.**

**Robert: What did she expect you to do?**

**Barbara: I was to be an assistant in the reference department.**

**Robert: Okay. And was that...was that the end of the library business that was always most attractive to you?**

**Barbara: Oh, Heavens, yes. I never did like the...I wasn't any good at the nitty-gritty cataloguing and filing and all that kind of.... What I liked to do was help the students. And that's what I ended up doing.**

**Robert: Okay. Now Mrs. Bobbitt was the...(head of the Reference Department) head of Reference? And she could hire you, just like that?**

**Barbara: Well, she...I had met her and her daughters-in-law over here across the street and had talked to her. And one time, I think when Jim was in, I went down and applied for a part-time job. I could see the writing on the wall, that they were all going to be gone in a year or so. So I got, and the only thing that they...they would have given me a job but it would have been in the Circulation Department, full-time, working nights and everything and I wouldn't consider that. Because I still had one**

at home.

So I gave up. Then I started, was gonna get a job as a substitute in teaching. I'd had some educational courses. I had all kinds of stuff. So, anyhow, Mrs. Bobbitt called. She knew that I had, I met her at this party and had told her that I was interested, you know. And she was wonderful. She had come to Marshall in 1932 or '33, right out of library school, and had been there ever since. (and worked that reference area and advanced to taking over?) Uh-huh.

**Robert:** And how long did she continue?

**Barbara:** I can't remember the year she retired...middle '70's, must have been.... I went on half time in '73, so, she must have retired in '74 or '75. (is she still living?) Oh, yeah. Down at Hilton Head.

**Robert:** Oh, okay. I've seen her....

**Barbara:** She retired down there to that beautiful retirement condominium thing they have down there. They have a bunch of them.

days they closed. Now, I think they're gonna close I think the whole week between Christmas and New Year's.

**Robert:** Barbara, they're closing on the 18th and they're opening on the 4th.

**Barbara:** It's unbelievable! (the whole campus is going to be closed that whole time) Of course, that's partly to save money, isn't it?

**Robert:** Well, that's part of it. But they've got that...

**Barbara:** Well, they have that day after Thanksgiving Day.

**Robert:** Yeah, and Moore gave a day and they didn't utilize it and they did, whatever it was. But they ended up putting it on the 21st of December's when they're using it. And I think there's Veteran's Day that they don't use on Veteran's Day so they're maybe using that for the 22nd. It's that kind of trade-off, that's going on.

Well, tell me if the students changed at all, or how they changed over the years that you were involved?

**Barbara:** Well, we were quite an interesting era, you know. We

had the late '60's and the '70's. And there was a lot of activity, anti-Vietnam War and that kind of thing. One of our sons went to North Vietnam. It was with a group, what was it? SDS? (that was one of the groups) Not that group, the other one. It wasn't as quite as radical. He was president of students at Wheeling College and he got in, into all that stuff.

**Robert:** When was that, Barbara?

**Barbara:** 1970.

**Robert:** In '70 he went to North Vietnam. (mmm-hmm) Where was he in school at that time? (Wheeling) I mean, class.

**Barbara:** Oh. He was either a junior or a senior. He must have been a senior, because he was president of the student government.

**Robert:** Okay, so he's roughly my age. Which meant he would have started college with a 2-S deferment, but ended college in the period of the lottery. How did he...or did he go C-O status?

**Barbara:** No, (he didn't go that route?) no, I think it had come to it he would have. No, let's see. They went...they went to college

in '67. (okay)

**Robert:** Okay. So he could have got a 2-S deferment then, a student deferment.

**Barbara:** I don't think they even had to register then, did they?

**Robert:** Yeah, we did.

**Barbara:** Oh, sure enough, and they pulled numbers.

**Robert:** In '69 they went to a lottery.

**Barbara:** Yes. And Jim's numbers were way, way up. Dan, the older one, had already enlisted in the Air Force in '66, I think.

Yeah, '66. Yes. And then he went to Vietnam in the Air Force in '68 and '69. But uh.... So we were pretty well involved in it. And

the students at Marshall...I think they were pretty much like they're always been. They...a group of them are quite active.

But I think the biggest percentage of them aren't very...do you?

**Robert:** I'm not being interviewed. [chuckles] Let's pursue that just a little bit. Let's say you're right. And I think you are. Why is that the case?

**Barbara:** Well, I don't know, I don't...partly I guess from their

backgrounds. An awful lot of them are from hard-working...I don't know how to put it. [laughing] Certainly not the yuppy types, you know. And I think they're, they have, Marshall students has always been more interested in getting an education and getting a job. Would be my general....

Robert: So, I don't want to put words into your mouth. But are you saying then that to a certain extent it's a function of not exactly economic deprivation at home, but the ability to look at home in the broader context of the environment, not necessarily the house or family, and in wanting something better. Whereas, some students in the '60's went to college from much more affluent situations and actually turned their back on that affluence.

Barbara: Yes, yes, I think so. And I knew a lot of students down there who were really quite active in.... And of course, we had all kinds of stuff. We had the streakers running through the library. I can't remember what year that was.

Robert: I think that was '72, '71, '72, somewhere in there, a



little later. At least that's when I remember it. (yeah, I think that's right, that's right). Well, when you.... Let's say during the height of this activism stuff, whenever that might have been, would students have come to you interested in let's say papers and needed work, needed assistance, and the themes, the topics would have been say different from ten years later. Did it, was it all reflected in that kind of stuff?

**Barbara:** To a certain...not, not too much, no. As I look back on it, most of them were still giving speeches. No, now, that's not true. Some of them did get into controversial subjects. But there's a...what do I want to say? Most of them, they had a whole string of standard subjects that they used. And right off hand I can't think of what the heck they were. But just oh...death penalty and you know....

**Robert:** Now, what you just said made me think that your typical student coming to the reference section is a Speech 103 or English 101 student. Is that...is that pretty accurate?

**Barbara:** That's...the biggest group, yeah. And they used to

come in in droves. We'd have them Monday and Tuesday nights, they'd have to sit on the window sills. Now that all stopped. I don't know why. But in the last few years I was there, in the early '80's, we didn't have that. They still used it, you know, for the 101 and 102 and.... And of course, I did a lot of work with the graduate students. English History. (by design or did you develop a reputation?) Oh, I was known as a little gray-haired lady. And they would come in and ask for the little gray-haired lady. [chuckles]

**Robert:** So you earned that business, if we can call it that?

**Barbara:** Oh, sure, sure. Well, a bunch of them uh...you don't know John Cyrus, do you? (no) He used to come in all the time. Oh, a lot of the history majors I worked with a lot.

**Robert:** Do you feel like the students...forget the general population. Those who came to you, they utilize the library well, with your guidance?

**Barbara:** Yes. Eventually they did. And uh...of course, it's entirely different now than when it was in my day. Now they

have the computer stuff and everything. But there was an awful lot of indexes and references and things like that, things that they didn't know anything about. And were most grateful to be led to them.

**Robert:** Was it...frustrating at all for you do direct students to these marvelous references works? Have them call through these reference works and discover that Marshall maybe owned by 10% of stuff that they were directed to utilize? Or wasn't that the case?

**Barbara:** No, I don't think that was the case. Marshall has a, had a good, solid selection, due to Mrs. Bobbitt and Mr. Apel. Mr. Apel was a real scholar. He was the director. (the head of the library? okay) And of course, we always had the problem with the periodicals. Because the first thing they cut was the library budget and then the first thing the library has to cut is the book budget and the periodicals. But during that time we also developed interlibrary loan system was started. And that was a big help to them. (and that was always run through your ...?)

**Through the Reference Department. I think now it's more or less independent, no, I guess it's still part of reference.**

**Robert: It's still there physically. I don't know what the chain of command is.**

**Barbara: But Kathy, Kathy Larson really started the interlibrary loan.**

**Robert: Let's talk about this Mr. Apel (not Apple, Apel) A-p-e-l? (mmm-hmm) Okay. What was his first name? (Harold) Harold? And do you have an idea when he came to Marshall?**

**Barbara: I think it was around '50-, 1956. (was he hired?) When Ms. Oliver retired. (okay)...**

**END OF SIDE 1**

**Begin side 2 - tape 1**

**Robert: ...fifties. What kinds of qualities did he have that made him, say, good to work with, good for the library at the**

**university?**

**Barbara: Well, he was a scholar, he is a scholar. He was Phi Beta Kappa. And of course, I can't remember.... Isn't that terrible? I can't remember what his college was, the university, I can't remember. Somewhere in Ohio. I don't know. But anyhow, he was interested in...in scholarly acquisitions. You know, I could take you to him on the shelf, but I can't remember.... But all kinds of things. He uh...he built up a thorough, thorough basic reference.**

**Robert: Did he...I guess you're saying he did take a personal interested in what was purchased? (oh, Heavens, yes) Now, today, department's request willy-nilly what they want. Individuals within the departments request what they want. And so that, I would guess that some portions of the collection are solid and some must be gaping holes. Did we ever have an opportunity to have standing orders with major presses? Where whatever they published, we bought?**

**Barbara: I don't know. I would doubt it. Because of the budget. I**

would be, I don't think so.

**Robert:** I don't know how that works, either. But I understand that it's practically like 40- or 50% per volume reduction in price because they know you're going to buy it.

**Barbara:** Yes. I don't know anything about that part it.

(well...) I just know, for instance, the British Museum, catalog of the British Museum, and all that kind of thing, came during those years.

**Robert:** The man just had a solid understanding of what a library ought to own. (yeah) To function.

**Barbara:** And he also supervised, practically built the addition.

And Kathy Larson and I were laughing about it the other day.

You know all the problems with the Science Building? We didn't have that problem with the library. Mr. Apel knew every nail that went in! [laughing] He was always running around in a hard hat. And he had keys, keys, keys, everything.... But he did a good, darn good job.

**Robert:** And when did he retire?

**Barbara: Seventy-two? When did Dr. Slack come?**

**Robert: That was my next question. Dr. Slack followed him?**

**(Unh-huh)**

**Barbara: I think it was '72.**

**Robert: How did, if in any way, did things change when Dr. Slack became head of the library?**

**Robert: Well, they were just entirely different. He, Dr. Slack is more P.R. business than the other, than Mr. Apel. And uh...I don't know.... I had very little to do with Dr. Slack, actually. By that time I was strictly working just with the students.**

**Robert: Was...but on the other hand, you were working with students in reference the whole time?**

**Barbara: Oh, sure, oh, yeah.**

**Robert: So that, are you suggesting that...that the two gentlemen had such different styles, maybe that you just didn't come in contact with Dr. Slack?**

**Barbara: Yeah, oh, yeah. Oh, I knew him and I still knew him and everything. But it was entirely different with..... I can't.... Well,**

for instance, if we'd have a real tricky question or something and you meet Mr. Apel in the elevator or something, you'd tell him right away. And he'd be all agog about it. If you had...somebody want.... I can't think of...oh, what was it somebody wanted? They were writing a paper on Jack the Ripper. And I took 'em to The London Times index and we looked up all the original stuff. All, and then of course, we have The London Times on micro. And they could go right to the original write-ups and that kind of.... Well, that's a very poor example. But if we had a real tricky question, he was interested. I can't imagine telling Dr. Slack. This is going on tape?

Robert: Well, I guess...

Barbara: It's just a different style.

Robert: ...what I'm hearing then is that...that Dr. Slack may have been more an administrator, Dr. Apel or Mr. Apel (Mr. Apel) more of a librarian. If those terms make sense (yes, I think so). Although of course, Dr. Slack is a librarian, that's what his work is. How is the internal governance of the library, in terms of



**working arrangements, scheduling, "democracy?" How's all that worked over the years that you were there?**

**Barbara: It's all been by department. The reference department for instance, has its own scheduling and planning that way. And the circulation department...because the needs are entirely different. And then of course, the technical services, the cataloguing and the order department and all of that, is another.... See, there'd be no reason for the reference department to be running the scheduling and the technical services.**

**Robert: So, in terms of those kinds of situations, you were almost a units? (yes, yes) And that meant that your life was in part a function of your relationship with your reference librarian? (yeah, yeah) And how many of those people did you work for?**

**Barbara: Well, Mrs. Bobbitt was the uh...head of the reference department until she...I think it must have been about '75 when she retired. And then Elizabeth Hill...(so you only worked for two**

people) yes.

**Robert:** And I just saw that she is retired.

**Barbara:** Yes, she left last...I just had a Christmas card from her.

**Robert:** She doesn't look anywhere nearly sixty-five or sixty-two to me. Is she? (65, 66) Is she really? (yes)

**Barbara:** She bought a place up in Maine, in New Hampshire.

**Robert:** Yes, very interesting name. I forget what the name, sounds like a place where Bob Newhart's....

**Barbara:** New London. (is that what it's called?) Mmm-hmm.

**Nooo,** that's not quite...there's another name.

**Robert:** Well, it sounds like a place where there'd be a little village inn and not much else.

**Barbara:** Yes, that's what it is, and she just loves it. (well, good)

She has a little house on a pond and she talks about watching the birds and the ducks and the geese. I can't imagine her. But she sounds real happy.

**Robert:** Well, let's compare these two women for a couple of

minutes as....(who? Mrs. Bobbitt and?) as bosses and colleagues.

**Barbara:** Well...Mrs. Bobbitt...had been in the library for, well, I guess fifty years, by the time she retired. And she was much, much more a librarian than Elizabeth. She, Elizabeth came, she worked at Kaufman's in Pittsburgh for many years. And then she finally...let's see, she came to Marshall in either '68 or '69. And that was her first library job. So there's really no comparison. She, Elizabeth is a good administrator. I don't know. I don't think you can compare them. Too different, entirely different deals. Mrs. Bobbitt...

**Robert:** How about if you define each of them a little bit, then, more clearly than what you did?

**Barbara:** Well, for instance, Mrs. Bobbitt set up the original West Virginia collection. She...you know, catalogued and organized, long before we had the West Virginia....

**Robert:** When was that done? (when?) Yes.

**Barbara:** Oh...end of '68 and early '70's.

**Robert:** And was it, where was it housed?

**Barbara:** On the 3rd floor. (still up there...) But there wasn't any, there was no staff up there or anything. It was just a storage.

**Robert:** Okay. Was there an archivist hired then?

**Barbara:** No, no, that all came...[pause]...soon after Dr. Slack came, maybe within two years, I guess. Gosh, I forget. But she was, well, you ought to talk to some of the old staff that Mrs. Bobbitt knew. She knew every book in the library. (so that...) Now, that wasn't Elizabeth Hill's strong point at all. (what was?) Well, they got more into the technical part. They got involved in the computer stuff and that kind of thing. They just had an entirely different.... And they weren't, after Mrs. Bobbitt left, the emphasis was not any longer on helping the students. (where'd it go?) Where did what? (where was the emphasis then?) Well, I don't know. It just was entirely different. I used to, the students would used to say, "Oh, I came in and asked for something and they sat at the desk and they said "go down the hall...left hand side." They weren't...that era in the end they

were not just student-oriented.

**Robert:** Did that change before you retired?

**Barbara:** Mmmh...Mmm-hmm. It has changed now, I understand.

They have some good I don't know their names or anything, but I understand ....it's a difference in...just a difference in attitude, that's all. Of course, I was severely criticized because I spent all, all my time helping the kids. (criticized by whom?) By some of the staff. Because I wasn't interested in making up bibliographies on women's rights and...that kind of thing, you know. I thought it was much more important to help the students, which is what I did. And loved. Had a ball.

**Robert:** So, what you're saying is that some reference type librarians would prefer to be working on the creation of reference tools? (yeah) Rather than people-people? (yeah) Oh, okay. And getting into this, I can't remember now, what's the computer search thing that can be done over there now? Was that just coming in when you...

**Barbara:** Yes, yes, I got out just in the nick. I can't think of it,

either. (well, whatever, access or something, I forget) Yes.

Yes, access is one of them. I don't know. But there's two or three different ones.

**Robert:** Well, did the job ever, the way you pursued your job, did it change?

**Barbara:** Mmm-hmm, mine never did. It just got better. I just kept slothing off all the side jobs and.... Other than the last few years I was there, I never really did anything except work with the students. Oh, I had a couple other minor little things I did. I did all the annual reports, company annual reports. And conference reports, that was always mine. But the rest of the time.... And I was busy all the time. All the time I was there. Of course, they did, Dr. Slack let me go on part-time, you know, in '73, I think it was.

**Robert:** Yes, I heard you mention that. Why did that happen?

**Barbara:** Well, I just decided that, you know...we were working three nights a week, and until 10 o'clock and I just thought, "This is..." Anyhow, I talked to Mrs. Bobbitt about it, and they'd never

done it. And she said she didn't know, but she did ask Dr. Slack. So, she did and they said, "Yes," they'd try it. I was an experiment that worked out fine.

**Robert:** And the experiment was that you would work just days?

**Barbara:** Yes, yes. And I worked twenty-hours or something, in a week.

**Robert:** Did they revolve in any way?

**Barbara:** No, I think I'd...I'd go in...I'd go in, one day a week I worked...Monday, I think it was, I worked 8 to 4:30. And then oh, I can't remember. Other days I'd go in at either 12 or 1 and work until 4. And then I had a day off, I can't remember what that day was.

**Robert:** Was there any bitterness to you because of this treatment?

**Barbara:** No, no, no. They didn't care. From the other staff members? (yes) Oh, no. They were delighted. No, no, no. It was all very friendly and....

**Robert: Now, if you'd been a full-time employee and been able to negotiate all days, would that have caused a problem? (oh, sure, I wouldn't have done it) Is it pretty much a given that reference people are going to have to work some nights?**

**Barbara: Sure, sure. And when I first started that, when we, in '67 when we started, we worked three nights a week. And then recently, they've only had to work one night a week.**

**Robert: How did you work the scheduling of that? I mean, was there a pecking order, based on seniority or....? Who got stuck with Sunday's? Or did it just revolve? Everybody sooner or later?**

**Barbara: Everybody. Including Mrs. Bobbitt, the reference librarian. She took, she took her time. She didn't work any nights, though. And I'm pretty sure she worked Sunday's. I can't remember. But anyhow, see...in be...when they opened the new addition and everything, they also opened what they called the collegiate library. They took the second floor.... See, we had closed stacks up until not too long ago, maybe (I remember**



hearing people talking about that) '75 or something, or maybe '76. Anyhow, so the collegiate library was an experiment in open stacks. And it had just a, like a miniature collection of everything. Reference and the works. They had a separate staff up there. And that's how they could work some of this, the ones in the collegiate library, the staff members up there, would take a night and they would have the whole thing, see. And when we down in the reference department, when we had a night, we would take the collegiate library and the...so that it would work out.

And the other thing, during those days, we had a lot more student assistants, a lot more. Because we had closed stacks, see. And the student assistants had to go into the stacks and bring the books out. So we had to have a lot more help that way.

Robert: And you lost that help when you went to open stacks? (yeah) Was that...was that...let me ask you differently. Surely those student assistants could have been utilized other ways that would have been worthwhile, so that in a sense the library

**did loose or didn't you look at it that way at all? All of a sudden we just didn't have the need and we couldn't envision utilizing them wisely some place else, so they went off and worked in Admissions or wherever?**

**Barbara: I think so. I think they just.... Of course, they were called pages or something like that, weren't they? (could be, yeah) And I don't think they were interested in a job. Some of them were and some of them stayed on. And each department still has their own student assistants. We had some good ones in the reference department through the years.**

**Robert: But if you had more, then you get into the struggle of what is a reference librarian, don't you? (yeah) But there's certainly, it seems to me, are some tasks in the library that student assistants can do quite well, which allow the professional people more flexibility**

**Barbara: Yeah, to be free to...yeah, and that's what perceptually we used them.**

**Robert: Let's talk a little bit about personal and professional**

kinds of things. Did the library, the administration of the library, the administration of the university, support or acknowledge the professional needs of librarians in any meaningful way?

**Barbara:** Well, I think you could say that the librarians are always sort of the step-children. We used to kid because the graduation parade, you know where the librarians come? (well, since it's not first, it must be last) well, it's not quite last. It's just above the buildings and grounds. (oh, I think buildings and grounds marches in before) well, they used to. [chuckles] (oh, okay) Which we always thought was kind of funny. But I think in general, I don't know. It's a problem. And of course, they're still fighting for faculty status, you know.

**Robert:** No, they've got it now.

**Barbara:** Do they have it now? (yes, they might not get to keep it, but they've got it right now) Oh, I didn't realize that. I didn't see that in The Parthenon.

**Robert:** Well, in fact, the faculty were not aware that it had

happened, either.

**Barbara:** Kind of snuck in.

**Robert:** Yes. The president had the power to do it with the stroke of a pen for a long, long time. (ohhh) And he did it a year ago, and asked the faculty to accept it as a temporary situation, calling them adjunct instructor, assistant, associate and full professors or whatever. Because the board refused to allow the creation of what the library was requesting, which was a status, a professional status, not faculty, not staff, called Librarian I, II, III and IV. And they'd have their own salary schedule, their own criteria for advancement and whatever. And the board said, "No." And so Nitzschke said, "Fine, then we'll make them faculty." And that was to be a temporary thing, hoping the board would change its mind. So far the board hasn't and the temporary thing has become much more permanent, with the apparent understanding that Nitzschke is still going to push for this professional status.

**Barbara:** That sounds like a better deal to me. But I...

**Robert: Well, I think it is. You know, we don't have any library degrees programs. They, the librarians. (you mean at Marshall?)**  
**Yes. Librarians do have professional needs. But they are not instructional people. I mean, they just aren't, in the traditional sense.**

**Barbara: Wellll, no, but there's an awful lot of librarians working construction.**

**Robert: Yes, I won't argue with that. But the problem is, how are we going to define criteria or promotion? We're in the big fight right now about having university-wide standards. Well, if the standards are teaching, research, university service, well, somebody's going to have to be very flexible in their definition of teaching. Not everybody's willing to do that. The librarians currently do not have the time, nor perhaps the inclination to do research. What do we do with that factor? It just seems like everybody would be better served...(can I turn this off?) One second.**

**[tape off then on]**

**Robert: It just seems like the librarians themselves would be better served, and the faculty would be better served. The main concern, from where I got involved, was that the library is underfunded, librarians are underpaid, and they don't have the kind of professional autonomy that they deserve. Making them faculty took care of all of those. But as most of the faculty perceive the definition of faculty, our librarians aren't that, either. But they are professional people. (yes, that's the problem) So we do need to work on that. Now, let's talk about that for just a minute because I wanted to anyway.**

**The previous head, Mr....(Apel) Apel, was he at all concerned about that issue? The status of librarians?**

**Barbara: I think it has always been around. I don't think there was, it was to the fore the way that it has been in recent years.**

**Robert: Okay. Because Dr. Slack, this really seems to be a burr under his saddle, and was for a long time, as I understand it. Did he start talking about it, do you think, quite soon after getting here, changing the status of librarians? (I don't know) But it**

**was certainly an issue by the time you retired?**

**Barbara: Yeah, yeah. And there were a couple on the staff that were really agitated for it. Isabel Paul, for one, was very active. (and left?) Uh-huh.**

**Robert: Well, you can only take so much before you give up, I think. Was the library, the professional librarian staff, were they ever split on professional kinds of activities? The...let me see if I can make that a little bit more clear. That...that each of you ought to be interested in learning more, developing more and going to conferences, becoming "better" through that channel at what you were doing, as opposed to those who might say, "Look at my job as here in this building..? You can leave that one off.**

**Barbara: Oh...I forgot what I was going to say. Oh, the professional librarians at Marshall have always been active in the professional field, in conferences and all that kind of thing.**

**Robert: Who pays for that?**

**Barbara: They paid their own way, most of the time. I don't**

know what the situation is now. But they used to go, for instance, the American Library, ALA, year after year after year and they paid their own way. California and Texas and Chicago, and they never got reimbursed. And...

**Robert:** Let me...was there ever any reason why they should have expected to be reimbursed? I mean, I take it for granted that if I'm going to a conference, the university ought to be paying for it. But the librarians did not perceive it that way, apparently?

**Barbara:** Well, I don't know. Because I didn't know...you say, did some of them say my job is here. That's what I said. I always said, "Somebody has to stay home and keep the store. I'll tend the store." And they'd all go off to these meetings.

**Robert:** Did they think of you as a slouch in any way because of this? (ohh, no) Okay.

**Barbara:** No, they were delighted. And they often, often said that, you know, that it's my turn to go and one of them would stay. But I always did that.



**Robert: So as far as you know, professional travel was personally financed.**

**Barbara: As far as I know, Bob. I don't think.... Now in more recent years I think they have been reimbursed for some of it, within the last ten years. For instance, they could get a state car, they'd use a state car. And.... Now I don't know what...I don't know about ALA for instance, whether they got reimbursed for that or not. They may have...some.**

**Robert: Looks to me like we've got about three minutes of tape left here. Maybe not even that long. (good!) [RS: chuckles] Why don't you, in your own words, say what you would say if someone said, tell me your feelings, your perceptions of your, what you gave Marshall University, what you received from Marshall University.**

**Barbara: Well, I loved it. I just loved the work that I did. Every single day was a new challenge and I loved working with the students and I knew hundreds of them. Not by name, but I still see them all around town. I liked the...I just liked being around**

and finding the answers and finding material for them. And I got, it was a big personal satisfaction, to work with them. And then, you know, they'd come back afterwards and say how great it was that they had done real well on such and such a project and thanked me and all this stuff, that kind of thing. It was really quite a personal feeling of satisfaction. I loved it. And I got along real well....

**END OF Side 2**

**END OF INTERVIEW**

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