LANDMARKS SOCIETY ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

P.O. Box 134 Belvedere-Tiburon, California 94920 415-435-1853

Transcription of Taped Oral History

Side A

This is an Oral History tape for Landmarks Society Oral History Program. My name is Jeanne Ortalda and I am going to interview Pat Bertrand who will be the narrator (N). The interview is being held at 14 Paseo Mirasol in Tiburon on May 11, 2001.

I: Pat, I'd like you to begin by telling us about when you first started coming to Belvedere.

N: Well Jeanne, as you and I both know, much has been told about Belvedere and Tiburon in the 20s and 30s and way before that. But in the late 30s and early 40s when I came here, the history, I would say, was much the same - up until World War II in 1945 and then everything changed drastically. So what I can describe was the late 30s and early 40s which there is not a whole lot on.

I: Well, it would be really great if you'd fill us in on that section.

N: OK. We came to Belvedere from Los Angeles in 1937. My step-father was head of a news agency, INS of Los Angeles, and he got transferred to San Francisco and my mother knew a lot of people in Belvedere. So, in 1937 we spent the summer with June and Henry Kirchman, friends of my mother's, and we went house-hunting. We looked at three houses, the Crocker house, the Blanding Organ house and the Parker house. They were all for sale between $9,000 and $11,500. It was the Depression and people were selling and leaving or leasing or just leaving the houses empty and renting in San Francisco. So we ended up with a lease with option to buy in the Parker/Bland house. The lease was for 5 years. We chose that house because it had a dock and a wharf and a float and all that. My brother and I, who were 13 and 11, were crazy to have a boat.

At that point I got a job in the City [San Francisco] with the Community Chest. My first paycheck was $50 and I bought [from Dick Stephens] what was called a Moon boat which was 12 feet long, single sail, rudder center board and it was the forerunner of the El Toros. And my brother bought a little skiff. So we were in business.
All the kids who lived in Belvedere had to swim from the shores of Belvedere, about where the little commute ferry boat docked, across to the Corinthian Yacht Club. And if we could swim that distance, we could go out alone in our boats. Otherwise we had to have a companion. And it was an easy swim. And somebody would say, "Oh, isn't the cove dirty from all those arks?" Well, we were out that far there was a tidal flow; we swam there all the time.

I: Well, who made this law?

N: My mother [laugh] My mother was not a good swimmer so she was a little fearful of the water so she got together with the Spaulding family behind us, who had a bigger sailboat, and the Kirchman kids and so they agreed if we could swim that distance, we could go out. And it was great. Because everybody had a little boat
My mother dove off the end of the pier one day and when she came back up she said. "I've drowned!" [laugh] She never tried it again.

We leased the Parker/Bland house from a woman named Rose Parker, an opera star, who thought she was the cat's eyebrows. It was her mother's home; she married a Commander Parker. Her mother let her live in it. It was four stories high. My brother and I had a bedroom on top. Living room and more bedrooms were on the middle floor. Kitchen and a little (I guess you'd call it) servant's room the next level down and then a playroom in the basement.

I: Is that house still there?

N: It's still there.

I: What's the address?

N: Well, the Zeiler's still live in it. We didn't have house numbers in those days; it was just Upper Beach Rd. The way all the deliverymen remembered the house was, "Whose's house was that?" "Oh, it used to be the Spaulding house." "Oh yes. OK" Even though it was the third or fourth subsequent owner or tenant, that's how they identified houses.
On the kitchen level was the little servant's room and everybody said to my mother, "That's the Chinaboy's room" And Mom said, "What do you mean?" "Oh, you have to have a Chinaboy." And my mother thought that was demeaning and she didn't like it. So she redid the room; she made it very nice. And all those old houses had those rooms and they used them for a houseboy. But my mother redid it and at first we hired the wife of a Navy man at the Net Depot. Later we hired a woman named Martha Hisey, an old maid, very strict, stiff lady who stayed with us for four years. My mother and father adored her and my brother and I hated her. [laugh] We ended up firing her. But she was a tough old cookie; she'd tell us what to eat and what to wear when my parents weren't there.
Note: Jeanne, I will include a copy of Martha's description of living in the house and the cooking she had to do and the impression is: she loved the house but she thought the cooking was a bit too fancy. But it's a charming little vignette of someone who worked there. [laugh]
Pat, that's great; we'll include it in the back of the oral history.

N: OK. To go on: when we came there, Belvedere was very much like it was in the 1920s and early 30s. You came up Hwy 101 (by 1937 when the Golden Gate bridge was in) and there was a road into Belvedere which was a two-lane road. No intersections, no stops. It went by the dairies and then you had to go all the way into Tiburon and go down Main St. and across the Corinthian Bridge to go into Belvedere. There was no San Rafael Ave. for cars. And Hwy 101 was very rudimentary; there were no stop signs. Cars coming down the Alto hill would just go speeding through the Belvedere/Mill Valley intersection. And there were lots of accidents. But it was beautiful; it was "country". There were cows, fields and these wonderful old dairies and then we threaded our way into town and up the hill. [laugh]
Which is the way it was in the 20s. There were two dairy ranches where everybody got their milk, cream and sometimes, eggs. But milk was like five

cents a quart, cream was fifteen cents a quart and you had to use a spoon to get it out of the bottle.
When we turned through Tiburon's Main St. which had grocery stores on the right and bars on the left, it was really very interesting. Because it was a mini-community. On the left, the first building was Oldag's Hardware and then the Corner Market (all these were on the water) and then Sam's bar (which was a house of ill repute and everything else and he was a wonderful man), [laugh] all the way down to the end where there was a drug store. And then you crossed over the bridge. There was nothing where Ark Row is; it was just blank. There were very modest cottages where some people lived. And then you made a left turn onto what is Beach Rd. today. The buildings I can remember are: the old Motorboat Club on the left (which is still there) and across the street from that was a big old barn, huge but modest (it had been a gas-station then became a fire department and Heine Hilton lived upstairs). This goes back to the thirties. Then at the other end of Beach Rd., at that time, there was the San Francisco Yacht Club on the grounds where there used to be a hotel. Across from that would be the Belvedere Land Co. building which was designed by Albert Farr. Otherwise, the stretches in between were pretty blank and it was very quiet when nobody was around. [laugh]

I: Wasn't there a library and all of that in the Land Co. building at that time?

N: Yes. There was a post office and library. In the corner, where my husband and I had an art gallery later, there was a little grocery store when we got there. It was Lem and Marian Allen Grocery and they were the darlingest couple that you could never believe ran a grocery store. They really didn't have to but it was almost like a hobby or something to do. Then, upstairs from the grocery store at that time, there was a beauty shop and a part-time doctor that people went to. At the other end of the building were the Land Co. offices and a telephone exchange and up above were a couple of apartments. And I remember one lady who shall be nameless; she would stand out on the balcony in her nightgown and would pull it up above her knees when the bus came in at night. [laugh] True story; true story! She's long gone [now]. Nobody would believe it. They'd say that anything like that would go on only in Tiburon, not Belvedere. But Belvedere had it! [laugh]

There is this wonderful big Land Co. building designed by Albert Farr but behind it was the old lagoon which was still there when we moved in. It was a great big muddy mess around the edges, decent water in the middle but it was kind of picturesque. There were arks along the west shore where some of the Italian gardeners lived and clear across the lagoon by the tracks were some more arks where the railroad people lived. And it was a lagoon. It was marshy; it had wild birds and so forth and the kids swam in this lagoon.

And shortly after we moved in (we moved in in '38)...I think Harry Allen moved there in 1937 although his wife, Winifred, grew up there. He moved in and said he was going to dredge the lagoon and build houses. And we all said, "You're crazy." [laugh] People were pretty much against it until it got muddier and was full of mosquitoes and kind of ugly. He started dredging. He dredged the lagoon for the fingers and he cut down some of the hill of the old golf club (which horrified some people) and started filling in. Then when, it started to harden, it started to crack so he had to get dirt from other places and that was when he started carving up Red Hill on the other side of Tiburon Blvd. But, as we all know, it turned out to be a very attractive place.

The first lots sold for $4,000 and $5,000 and my husband and I put a down-payment on a $4,500 lot on Lagoon Rd. And then we decided it would be an awfull mosquito-y, messy place to live and we sold it for $5,000! [laugh] I don't know if I wish I had it today or not. We bought that in 1946 or '47. He [Allen] started this project in 1936-37 and it took that long. Many of the people who bought lots at that time are still there. Mary Poole, for example. There are a number of permanent residents.

Anyway, that was behind the Land Co. office. And then you had to climb up the hill. And we all walked a lot except at night. Maybe on Friday night my brother and I would come home from school and we got into a taxi run by a fellow named Bill Barr who was a marvelous, generous ...nut. [laugh] He was crucial to the men who commuted on the ferries because he'd pick them up in the morning and he'd pick them up at night and charge them ten cents a ride. He also took students who went to Tam [High] to school in the morning and picked them up in the afternoon and he wouldn't charge them anything. And if there was a good movie in Mill Valley or San Rafael, he'd pick up any kid who wanted to go and take him and bring him home. Oh, he was just great. He ran the gas station on the corner of Main St. and Ark Row. (Ark Row is still Main St.) It was the last

business on Main St. right across the street from the drug store. And that's where we'd get all our gas.

I: Is that about where the parking lot is right now?

N: Yes. That's right. We had a wonderful old police dog named Shep and, for some reason, he knew Bill Barr - maybe from picking us up. Anyway, whenever Shep was missing, we'd go down there and he'd be in the garage, sleeping. [laugh] It was kind of like a second home. And he was kind of big and ferocious-looking so that people didn't like him down there. But he was very benign. But that was where he was.

I: Pat. tell about your teen-age years and what you did for recreation and so forth, living in Belvedere.

N: Well, it was a wonderful place to live especially for teenagers and older teens. Our major recreation was the Cove, sailing and swimming and picnicking down there or picnicking on top of the island [Belvedere] which was totally bare. And the west side had one house owned by the man who owned the Shadows Restaurant in San Francisco [Carl Rebmann] and it had the Codfishery. There was nothing else over there. And it was beautiful; you could look out over Richardson Bay, the eucalyptus smelled wonderful. We did hiking all over the island and especially along that west shore. When we came to Belvedere, the Codfishery had just burned down but the ruins were there.

I: What year was that?

N: It burned in early '37. And we were in our house in '38. But there was a dormitory and a shed that was left that was converted into apartments which I will tell you about later because my husband and I moved into one of them.

But to get back to our teen years, well, it was sports. Then, at night, when we weren't allowed to go out, we went to "tea dances and musical evenings". Now most of these were put on by a Mrs. Viola Spaulding whose two daughters were my best friends and who I went to college with and did most of my recreation with. Mrs. Spaulding was extremely strict and those girls never got out of her

sight until they married so their recreation was in their home. And we were all invited. And at the time we thought it was a lot of fun. [laugh] Now I don't think kids would sit still for it. But it was heavily chaperoned and very proper. Carol and Lorna were their names and Lorna is still alive and a good friend living in Los Angeles. Her sister, Carol, became a doctor and died young.
Then she [Mrs. Spaulding] had a son, Bill, who was my brother's best friend. Now, Bill was a real wild man. They used to go up on top of the island and hunt quail on a place called Wilson's Lot. Strictly against the law, so they muffled their guns with gloves and they'd come home with the quail in the cuffs of their jeans and made my mother cook them. And a cooked quail is about the size of a walnut. [laugh] The town constable, Barney Oldfield, knew what these kids were up to (they must have been 12 or 13) and he kept trying to catch them at it but he never could. [laugh] So it was very countrified; it was very undeveloped on the top and on the west side [of Belvedere]

I: Pat, would you tell the names of some of the young people and the older people that you knew then?

N: Well mainly, it was the Spaulding family that was right behind us: Carol, Lorna and Bill and then there was the Hume family. They had a boy named Ken that was a friend of mine; their daughter was Barbara. And then there were all the Rice kids: Bootie, Russell, Marilie. The McCallums had two children and the Maccouns had three or four. And that's about it; we were all between 14 and 18. But we all didn't go to Tam High. The Spaulding children went to Branson's, I went to a boarding school called Holy Names and my brother went to St. Mary's in Moraga. But we all got together on weekends. Harry and Winifred Allen had three children but they were older.
My parents were immediately lionized when they got there because of the job that my stepfather had. He was a coordinating war correspondent on the Pacific Coast going to the European Theatre where they *knew* there was going to be trouble. A lot of these people, especially I remember Ernie Pyle (who was a war correspondent) and another man who was head of the Hague Peace Conference, Trigve Lie, people like that would come to our home for dinner. And everyone else wanted to be invited to come to meet these people. It was pretty exciting. A lot of the neighbors were the Kirchmans (who introduced us to Belvedere)...all of these people were kind of on the top of Golden Gate Ave....

the Beckers, the Lamorees, the Boltons, the Reys, the Gales and the McDonalds were all close friends. And later, the Kretchmers and Palmers. And the reason I remember them is that when my stepfather died, they did everything for my mother and for me. I was included because she was a new widow and and I was a young teenager. I was invited on their boats, I was invited to their mountain cabins. Angus McDonald was president of Southern Pacific; he kept giving me passes to the snow country on a train called Snowball. They couldn't have been more wonderful. And when I got married in 1945, they all had a part of it. They dealt with the wedding, the reception, gorgeous presents. I mean, they outfitted the whole house. Not furniture but linens, silver and stuff. It was a project for Pat's marriage.
They knew Bud, who I met in '42 and he bought me a ring and he wanted to be engaged. I said, I'm too young, but let's write and I really upset him; I gave the ring back. But when he came home from Guadalcanal in 1945, that ring was in his pocket and I took it. [laugh]. Everyone had followed this romance for three years and was dying for him to come back and when he did, it was a big deal.

I: Pat, tell me about your house and your garden and where you shopped.

N: Well, the house was four stories. I think I mentioned my mother needed help in it which she got. The garden was kept up by a wonderful man named Louis Soldavini. Now Louis did that garden for ten dollars a month and he had done that garden for Rose Parker and her mother, Flora Bland. And he was taught his gardening by a man named Harry Pariani who was king of the Belvedere gardeners and much respected. They all lived down on the west shore of the natural lagoon behind the Land Co. offices. Now Louis is still alive and Louis lives on Mar West in Tiburon and he walks over to the bakery every morning. When I see Louis, he always says, "How's Mama?" And I say, "Remember, Louis, Mama's in Heaven" "Oh, that's right. Mine is, too. Well, say hello to her." And then he smiles. He comes to the intersection of Tiburon Blvd. and Main St. on his way to the bakery throws out feed for the pigeons.

I: I thought he always used to eat at Tom and Dave's.

N: He did. He did. But then he and his wife who he married late always had breakfast and dinner at the Hickory Pit and then when the Hickory Pit closed and

his wife had passed away, he started to go to Tom and Dave's. Now I see him in the window of the Boudin Bakery. Because it's closer to his house. I think he had a little trouble with his car; he's walking now. [laugh]

I: I always see him walking.

N: Oh, he's a wonderful man. And so "with it". And so angry at the maintenance of Belvedere now because after he quit gardening, he worked for the city for awhile. But one kind of fun story is: a girl who used to come and help Martha in our house was named Rosie Di Tomasi and Louis wanted to marry her. And he proposed but Rosie had other ideas and when we all commiserated with Louis, he just said, "So be it!" On the surface very cheery and much later, I would say when he was in his sixties, he married a woman who was a wonderful wife for him. She died maybe ten years ago. And you should see his garden on Mar West; it's full of roses. If you drive by, you can't miss it. But behind the roses are these old cars. [laugh]
So, it was Louis in the garden; it was always beautiful and if we tried to plant something or pull something up, he had a fit. And he said, "It's my garden." So we left him alone.
We got groceries at first from a little market called Beyries's on Main St. and then across the street, on the water at that time, was the Corner Market. And we did a lot of shopping there. And we got things down at the Allen Belvedere Grocery. But the fun thing was the vegetable man [Jason] who came around to the house three times a week in an ancient truck with open shelves on the sides where we could pick out our fruits and vegetables. But he used to talk to my stepfather a lot and they told stories about how he had a horse and buggy (that we never saw) before the truck. And before the horse and buggy, he walked. He walked from downtown and wound around the whole island.

I: He carried baskets on a stick over his shoulders.

N: That's right. But, by the time we shopped with him from '39 on, he had a little truck. We got meat from a place called Goldberg-Bowen in San Francisco and my stepfather would pick it up on his way home. Why they did that I'd never know unless they thought it was better meat. But he considered himself a real gourmet and a real entertainer so they had to have that.

My brother and I got up and down the hill with Bill Barr. Oh, and the big deal for us was when Musso came to town with a bakery.

I: What year was that?

N: I was trying to think of that. Well, it was before the war. Probably '39 or '40. He bought a big building on the corner called the McNeill building. He was famous for two things: his rum cakes, which we loved and the way he cooked with his bare hands. And when the kids would go in, he'd give them each a cookie. But if his hands were in the flour and the dough, he was working the dough, he'd pat our dog, Shep and then he'd give us a cookie and then he'd put his hands back in the dough. And nobody said a word. [laugh] It was his generosity and Shep got a cookie, too. Anyway, he was a very smart business man and ran a wonderful bakery and lived a long life. He bought other property in Tiburon along the way. Up above the Caprice [Restaurant] he owned a lot that he sold, incidently, to the Kirchman boy that we knew up on Belvedere.

I didn't mention the ranches. Coming in from the highway into Tiburon first we passed Little Reed Ranch which is where Del Mar School is. Then we went on to where Big Reed Ranch was which is where Reed School is now. And that's where we bought the cream, milk and eggs.

I: Did you ever see the brick kiln that was supposed to be along Tiburon Blvd., around that area?

N: At that time, it was gone. But the Newmans came shortly after and lived in the house that was on top of the brick yard. And to this day, my daughter and her neighbors on Old Landing Rd. in Tiburon are digging up bricks [in another brickyard]. That Old Landing Rd. is like two block long dead-end street below the secondary Tiburon fire station, the Trestle Glen substation. Down that road the whole thing was a brickyard and stone quarry.

I: Across the street [from the Newman property] was the remains of a boatyard on the beach of the Bay.

N: That was Olson's boatyard and it was still there when we moved here. And out along Beach Rd. there were these boatyards. Wasn't very active when we moved here. But there was no brick-making business that I remember.
We moved out on Old Landing Rd. and built the house that my daughter lives in now. And everybody who lives out there have bricks underneath their homes. It's called Old Landing Rd. and I named it along with a man named Bruce Keppel (he thought of it the same instant) because the quarry is up above behind the substation. They would blast the rock, they would send it down on a pulley to the end house on the road where there was a barge that would take it to the city. It was an old quarry landing so Bruce and I thought, "How about 'Old Landing Road'?" And that is what it is today.

I: You're famous!

N: [laugh] And then a man named Cuth and I named Old Spanish Trail.

I: Were you in Belvedere when World War II started?

N: Yes, I was, Jeanne. I was there in '38 because my stepfather was getting news from Europe about Hitler and all that was going on in Czechoslovakia with Chamberlain. So we were there in December of 1941. I was in school over in Piedmont and we heard it on the radio. My mother and stepfather were in Los Angeles. They heard that Belvedere had been bombed by the Japanese! And there was a total blackout up and down the coast. They were not allowed to drive from Los Angeles to San Francisco for three days but finally they were able to get phone calls to the house in Belvedere and our two schools and they came home. Well, Belvedere was in a tizzy. It was more than a tizzy; they were pretty frantic because they thought they were vulnerable to attack and so many of the homes faced the Golden Gate Bridge. And Belvedere, Tiburon and Corinthian agreed to a total blackout Within a week we had blackout curtains for the houses, we had a cadre of women who were block patrols. I remember a lady, not young - in her sixties, maybe, Lucille Boole who had a uniform and a hat and a flashlight and she and some of the other women would prowl up and down the streets at night to see if they could see cracks in the curtains or if anyone outside

was lighting a cigarette. And they cracked down and there were fines and everybody obeyed. Everybody did something. If they didn't have a local patrol or a Red Cross or a disaster uniform, they very soon went to work in the shipyards. And the girls in Sausalito worked in the Red Cross tents and canteens, etc.

Everybody, everybody did something for the war effort. And they got onto it immediately. From Day One we saved tinfoil, string and meat fat. Now, you remember Viola Spaulding across the street, she would go up and down and look in people's tin cans to see if there was any grease left and she would save it all in a towel and put it in the oven at 250 degrees and then pour it into a big container and turn it in to the Red Cross. She also planted a huge vegetable garden in case there wasn't enough food. Everyone was expecting the worst; everyone was expecting some kind of an attack. Which led to the very unfortunate relocation of our local Japanese family who had to leave by May of 1942 to relocation camps. Everyone felt sad; everyone supported them; everyone helped them save their belongings and then most people welcomed them back to Tiburon. But they were caught up in the scare with all the other Japanese on the west coast - and the Germans from the west coast who were interned until after the war.

Very shortly Marinship in Sausalito got into full swing and you can see what is left of the big loft buildings down there today. Also, what had been a coaling station on the east side of the Tiburon Peninsula became the Naval Net Depot and that's where they built the big floats that held the nets that went across the Golden Gate Bridge. And they did build them and they did hang there and it was to keep out Japanese submarines. Now, historically, we know that there were no Japanese submarines in the Bay. We think maybe there was random shelling down along the Santa Barbara coast but that's never been verified. The Pacific Coast was never attacked. That's what the people who lived there, then and now, believed. There were a lot of wild rumors but that is all they were, just rumors.

However, it affected our lifestyle because of the need for supplies. We all had ration books. I took mine and my mother's down to the archives [Landmarks] and they are on file down there. We were rationed for gasoline, sugar, shoes, meat. Speaking of meat, you could buy certified horse meat at Goldberg-Bowen and at one meal my mother served horse meat. She didn't tell us what it was; I thought it was delicious. It was very, very lean; it had no fat in it. It was very

dark, it was very sweet and my stepfather loved it. When dinner was over, she told us what it was. I thought it was OK; my brother had to go to the bathroom to throw up. [laugh] Mom didn't try that again, but it was available. To me, it tasted like a very strong venison.
We all got together to drive different places. And we also found out some of the teenage boys on the island would go out at two and three in the morning and syphon gasoline out of any cars that were on the road because we didn't have locking gas caps in those days. It made dating hard because you couldn't go anyplace.

I: Well, how about fishing out in the bay; wasn't that available?

N: Yes. We fished a lot. Ninety percent of what we caught were little sharks. But people who fished off the east shore along Paradise Dr. could get bass and salmon. They did and we did and they were wonderful. Now, my youngest son fishes out there today and he won't bring the fish home and he won't let me eat them. He says, "Mom, there's just too much stuff in the water." We also used to swim over there and now we don't do anything like that. Polution.

I: Wasn't that area called California City?

N: California City was just a wide spot in the road; it was not a city. It was where the Coaling Station was and they the Net Depot and today it's the Romberg Marine Center. It adjoins old Paradise Park where they had the El Campo recreation grounds.

I: I know, to this day, that fishing boats go off the coast of California City (it's what they call it when they go out to fish) and they're catching fish and I expect they eat them. But they're quite a bit offshore.

N: What they do is troll and we can see them going through the straits [Racoon] and going up there. John says they're up there all the time. Right now, this week there was a bill in front of the Marin County supervisors to allow those boats to catch salmon off the Tiburon shore and the California City shore and give them a quota. Commericial salmon fishing. And I believe this morning's I.J.

[*Independent Journal*] says they're not going to get the permit. They can catch other fish but not salmon because they are in a spawning mode.
Which reminds me, that when I first built my house up on Spanish Trail which is off Vistazo East, we could look out and watch the whale boats coming through Racoon Straits. Little tugs dragging a whale at the stern, twice as big as they were and the boys would yell, "Mom, Mom, there's another whale!" We'd get out the binoculars. They took them to Pt. Richmond where there was a rendering plant and if the wind was blowing east to west, you could smell it. And within five years or so they closed the rendering plant and they rerouted all the boat traffic out of Racoon Straits to the far side of Angel Is. That included oil tankers and traders that used to go through the straits. One time one of them ran into the wall where the Caprice is now. A freighter went aground. They were noisy and they were a hazard to the recreation boats. So, I would say, that at about 1965 they all had to go around Angel Is. But the whale boats were a very exciting event and my kids would keep a count of how many went through. Now you can't even hunt for whales in these waters.

I: Didn't those whales come from outside the Golden Gate?

N: Oh yes. Way out. They didn't catch them in the Bay. I saw a small whale in Racoon Straits about two weeks ago and it was heading north like towards Richmond Bridge. But it wasn't Humphrey! [laugh]

SIDE B

I: Pat, would you say how the war affected you?

N: It had a major influence on my life like it did on so many of us. My brother graduated from Tam in 1943 and immediately enlisted in the Navy. My husband was sent to Guadalcanal. I had met him when I was 17 in the spring of '41, I guess and he was drafted into the Army and was sent immediately to Guadalcanal.

I: You weren't married then.

N: No, no, no. I was in college and he was three years older than I was. He always would say he was distantly smitten and my mother would interfere. Mom could be pretty strict and I thank her for it. [laugh] But he went overseas and he was on Guadalcanal for three years. He did not get engaged in the fighting; he was in the supply command and shipping of the goods. He was very lucky but traumatized by it all.

Now the hardest thing that happened was that my stepfather had a massive heart attack in the winter of '42 and he died. Now, he was a young man, maybe forty-five but under enormous pressure, always running around and he'd had rheumatic fever as a boy in Denmark and never recovered from it. The doctor said that that was the main contributing factor. Well, that left my mother devastated. She had a hard time with that, obviously. I was at Stanford but I moved back home at the end of the school year to be her and we stayed on in the big old house until 1945. And then my brother came home from the Navy, my husband came home from Guadalcanal, I graduated from college and all these people who were so friendly to my mother and me who were so supportive after Haakon's death, they helped her get a job in the City. She became the publicity chairman for the Red Cross and the Community Chest and commuted with all these wonderful men I've mentioned early on.

So, the war was over and I was planning my wedding. I got married in June of '45 and immediately my husband and I moved into the old Codfishery which was the most rugged, romantic, dramatic place. We moved down there because he knew a man named Dave Lemon who was an artist and we lived there for about a year.

At that point, Harry Allen had moved some of the arks off the lagoon over onto Beach Rd. where the Ark Apartments are now. My mother moved into one of those arks which was just a gem. Everybody loved it. And my barother went away to college. We stayed at the Codfishery for about a year and then we opened what is called an art gallery and shop in the old Belvedere Grocery Store.

I: Wasn't your husband an artist, himself?

N: Yes. My husband was an artist; he went through the Academy of Advertising Arts which is still a great big business today and he was a fine artist (I mean a portrait painter, water color-type artist). So we opened this gallery down in this

old grocery store building which had stood empty after the Allens left it. We totally redecorated it. There was a cute little appartment in back with a fireplace and so forth which is where we had our first baby. Which was kind of fun. Selden Giles had the library right next door and so he helped us. He and Bud and a lady named Olive Fetherstonehaugh were great buddies and they would go out painting and I would mind the shop. [laugh]

In the summer of '46, I took the first census in Belvedere and there were 654 people. Another friend, named Joyce, did Corinthian and I don't know what her numbers were. Harry Allen thought the numbers were too small and he called me up and said, "Pat, I don't think you got everybody; did you get my maid?" I said, "yes, I did; I talked to her personally." So the figures went in as 654. Well, that population would not support a little art gallery. [laugh] And we starved to death. So he started doing water colors of the area and word got around that he would paint a watercolor of your house for $20. So he did several dozen around the community. In the meantime my father-in-law said, "You kids are not making it; I'll give you a lot. next to ours on Paradise Dr."

So we closed the shop after about a year and went over to what we named Old Landing Rd. And we built our own little house right on the water. And it was wonderful. It's the house that my daughter lives in today with her family. When we were there it was small. It was made out of concrete blocks and nice shake roof and the first thing we did before we really finished the inside was to build a long wharf for my little boat. So it was pretty idyllic and I kind of lost track of what was going on in Belvedere. We moved over there in '47 and lived there ten years. And, in that time, I had four babies. [laugh] Then, in 1957, my husband died in an automobile accident which was pretty traumatic. And my in-laws came in to Paradise Cove to live next door to me and to take care of me. That was not a very good idea. [laugh] It wasn't a very happy situation.

So, I was given another lot up in Lyford's Cove. But before I was given that lot by my mother and stepfather and I built a house there where I still live, I want to go back and tell you about my second stepfather.

My mother was widowed three times. When captain Haakon Hammer died, there was a big obituary in all the papers and this man from Lyford's Cove, named Jonas von Rosen, came to my mother's door one night. No phone call, no note, no nothing. This was this big house up on the island and here was this gentleman in an evening coat, tie, spats, a cane and he introduced himself and he clicked his heels and he kissed my mother's hand and he apologized and

said, "I had to meet you, Madam, I went all through school with your husband in Denmark." The families in Denmark were close friends. And these two men had never heard of one another or made the connection. Because Jonas was a naval architect who came to Tiburon to help convert the *Eureka* to the *Ukiah* [ferryboats] and that's what he was doing in Tiburon. He was assigned to Mare Is. as a naval architect by Franklin Roosevelt when Roosevelt was Undersecretary of the Navy. So he commuted from Mare Is. to Vallejo down to Tiburon to work and then he'd go home at night. He knew Hugo Keil and one day, in his horse and buggy, he went over to Hugo's for dinner. And on the way home, he saw this little shack up on the hill so he thought he'd go up and see what was up there. Well, it was a little cottage built by Hugh Boyle who was a Reed heir. If you look at the old maps, all of that land was all the lands of Boyle. This was about 1928-29. So he bought that and he bought seven acres up there. During the war, he was sent to the Phillipines to help with their naval installations and his first lovely Danish wife contracted tuberculosis and he had to bring her home to die. Which was very sad; she was very young and beautiful. I think there's a picture of her in the archives.

Anyway, Mom was widowed for three years; Jonas had been widowed for about 15 years and he got it into his mind that he wanted to propose to my mother. And my Mom turned him down. She said, "I don't know you. I'm sorry. First, I have to go to Denmark and return Haakon's ashes and meet the family and while I'm there, I will look up your family." Which she did and when she came back he continued to pursue her. Finally they married in 1949. She was 49 and he was well into his sixties. He was quite a bit older but quite a man about town. But the way they met was so bizarre and such a coincidence. Of course, my brother and I were grown and married so Mom moved out of the ark and up to Lyford's Cove. Which is a most fabulous geographic area. It's sheltered from the wind, gets full sun, full view, everything grows there. In our big old house in Belvedere, the sun would leave us about noon and it was cold and dark and when we got away from there, we realized what it was like.. Now, the west side of Belvedere is more desirable because they get all the sun. And now it's so built up, there's not so much wind. It was frowned on in the early years because it was so windy over there. And no trees.

Let's get back to '57 when I lost my husband, I stayed on down there for another year or so and then I started building a house up in Lyford's Cove and by the end of '59 I had moved in. And I'm still there. [laugh] Jonas loved that place. What

he did before he married my mother was give away lots. Any young woman he knew that got married, he would give them a lot. So he gave them the lot across the street and he gave away two lots on the hill below that and by the time he married my mother, he decided not to give away any more lots. Well, they gave me my lot and they gave my brother a lot and they sold two lots.
Jonas died in 1959, so they were married ten years And my mother kept right on truckin'; she had three more proposals, got rid of them fast and lived to be 95 after quite a brief spell of Alzheimer's. So, I rent her house out to a lovely young woman whose name is Mitzi Kuatani who is the daughter of the Kuatani family who owned the laundry and had to be relocated during the war. I couldn't have a better tenant.

I: During this time, Pat, the railroad in Tiburon took up most of the town, but I don't suppose you had much to do with it.

N: I remember it very well and we didn't have much to do with it but we were very, very aware of the trains coming in day and night bringing goods from the north. I remember they were usually logging trains. And there were quite a few grain and vegetable shipments and heavy equipment. They were taken onto ferries in Tiburon and went over to San Francisco and Oakland. We loved listening to them. Also, this was the time of the big old railroad trestle over the curve there by Blackie's Pasture. And one interesting thing; in that pasture, of course, was Blackie. We all visited Blackie and fed Blackie carrots and loved Blackie but Blackie had a girlfriend named Snowball. Now there were two horses in that pasture and they would play and frolic together. Snowball was there nearly as long as Blackie but one day they were frolicking along beside the tracks and Snowball ran into a freight train and died. I'd like to put to rest a rumor here and that is that Blackie is buried there under that cross at the far end of the pasture. According to the early residents of Belveron West, Blackie was taken away at night and is not buried in the pasture. Now there is a little white picket fence and a little white cross. Shortly after, my daughter took her children to put daisies on the Blackie's grave. It's still a nice tradition.
Back to the railroad. It was very much a part of Tiburon life and it was the center of life for the residents of Tiburon and the arks along that side of the lagoon. All of the second and third generation Italian families who are still living in that area, all their fathers and grandfathers worked on that railroad in one job

or another. Trains no longer come to Tiburon but there is talk of bringing the trains back as far as San Rafael, but they can't come to Tiburon because there's a wonderful bike path where the tracks used to be in Tiburon. The trains have left Tiburon but we have a wonderful commute to San Francisco on the ferry system. The Golden Gate Bridge is now very congested, so the ferries are a relaxing commute. That's kind of our lifestyle today.

I: That's very interesting about the lifestyles and I love everything you told me about but I'd like to know a little bit about your accompishments because I know, aside from naming roads and things, you have been very active in the community and have been very active in the Landmarks Society and the establishment of it and I wonder if you'd tell us a little bit about that.

N: Well, I've had a very busy life in my 76 years. I retired last October and I didn't know what to do with myself, at first, but now I'm beginning to like it and do some volunteer work. But to go back to 1957, I had got a graduate credential with Dominican College and when they heard about my husband's accident, they offered me a job. So, I went to work in their high school and I stayed there 6 years. My mother and my mother-in-law helped with my young family. My children were 18 months to 11 when their daddy died. I taught History and English at Dominican and it was a piece of cake as they were so disciplined. In those days Catholic schools and colleges didn't pay very much so Terra Linda High School was being built so I applied for a job over there and, with the nuns' blessings, I was hired and stayed 26 years. While all that was going on, my kids were growing up and Beverly (Bastian) and Carol Ericcson were founding the Landmarks Society which was formalized in 1959, It was Beverly's idea, really, mutually with Carol and the land was owned by a Dr. McNaught whom I knew because we bought a sailboat from him. And he was very amenable to the idea of selling the land to Landmarks; he was going to build duplexes like the duplexes up next to the church now.

I: What land are you talking about? Old St. Hilary's Church?

N: I'm talking about that he was going to tear down the church and build duplexes on the drainage-shed. This was '59. Well, Belvedere became apoplectic as did Tiburon and through the work of Beverly and Carol and Nature

Conservancy, the church and land was saved. They started building the new St. Hilary's Church in the early '50s and the old church was abandoned and so that it sat empty and was subject to a little bit of vandalism until 1959 when Landmarks Society was established and it saved Old St. Hilary's and the land behind it and to the side of it.
So I was what they called the Curator (before the docents came), and I remember bringing a big old glass-topped desk that had belonged to Jonas over to the church. We put it in the middle of the back lobby and we filled it full of rocks and Indian artifacts. And it stayed there for quite awhile. When we finally opened the church it was there. When they opened it up for weddings, funerals and christenings, we started the docent system. I think I was a docent coordinator for 20-25 years. [laugh] I was able to get someone to take my place last year, Helen Lindquist, but she has twisted my arm and I still go up there and open it once in awhile. And I probably always will because I love it. You tell anyone in the county about "the little church on the hill" and they'll know what you mean. And Landmarks saved it. It has survived two heavy earthquakes so it will be there a long time.

I: Pat, you've done more things; you've been a board member for Landmarks all these years and...

N: I did serve on the board for nine years because we were limited to three terms. Since I've left the board they have acquired the Newman property [for an Art and Garden Center]. They now have four venues; first was the church, then the China Cabin, and then the Donahue Building (called the Railroad Depot now). I don't think that is a very good name; it's been known forever as the Donahue Building to local residents. The depot is the Book Depot and Cafe in Mill Valley. The fourth venue is the Newman property that is not open yet. This morning a huge dump truck was disgorging rocks for building retaining walls so it's taking shape. So from 1959 to 2001 it's growing, growing growing along with the history of Belvedere/Tiburon.

I: Thank you so much for giving this information because you've covered things that's never been covered before in our oral history program. You've certainly seen it all.

N: Thank you, Jeanne

Additions after the interview: By the time I moved up to what is now Spanish Trail, Reed School had been built, but my own children went to grades one to three in the old Tiburon School which is now Bradley House. My Tina had Ruth Wosser as a teacher who is still around, still active and still friendly. In that particular little neighborhood were the Grbacs, the Kirchers, the Bradleys, the Di Tomasis, the Soldavinis, all right around there, within one block. Just wonderful friends, supportive, and they and/or their children are all there. Betty Di Tomasi, one of the original residents, helps with the maintenance of the old church and she says she does it out of pure love for it. It keeps her busy, keeps her young and she feels like it's her home.

I: Another family up there was the Frank Brooks family. And his son, Peter, is doing a lot of volunteer work over at the new Art and Garden Center.

N: Oh, absolutely. The Brooks were there and they were stalwarts of the community and they are still there.

N: I would like to tell about the legacy that my husband, Bud, had left to Belvedere/Tiburon and that is his drawing of Old St. Hilary's which is the logo on so many of our cards, bags, books, etc.. The reason he did those was for my mother who in '45-'46 was a publicity director for St. Stephens Church and she and Beverly Bastian were trying to get up a fund-raising scheme for the church. So my mother said, let's get Bud to design some gift cards. So he designed four of them: one with the old church, one with the straits of Belvedere, one was of St. Stephens Church and the other one was a marvelous vignette of Beach Rd. with a little MG tooling along it. And those four cards he reproduced by the hundreds and made quite a lot of money for the church. And the little drawing of the church has been reproduced thousands of times and is still in circulation. So that's his contribution.

I: Well, don't we have, in the archives, some of his paintings that are now under what we call the Artist As Historian?

N: Right. There's a very nice water color of the top of Golden Gate Ave. full of eucalyptus trees. Quite modern. He studied with an artist called Dong Kingman and everybody who looks at his works says, "That looks like a Dong Kingman". But I say, "No. that's a Bud Bertrand." But that was his teacher. There are quite a lot of water colors privately owned in our community and in Marin [County] and when the archival committee has approached these people to donate or sell them to Landmarks, they say. "No way! We're going to keep them." And I still have several of them. But we made our living for a year doing those drawings.

I: Well, he was a great artist.

End

I: