

CLARE BEAVEN TRANSCRIPT

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INTERVIEWER: Damian Macey

TRANSCRIBER: Donna Duzan, October 2018

D: I am Damian Macey and I am representing the Friends of the Library Oral History Project. I have with me today Clare Beaven who grew up in the area and now teaches in our Marshall School District. With that I will turn it over to Clare.

C: Thank you Damian and I first want to thank you for your work on the Oral History Project, I think that it is an important project to preserve our history. In thinking about doing this interview I was thinking that most everybody living in Marshall was actually born in Terre Haute, IN in one of the hospitals there. That includes me. I was born in 1955 and Terre Haute, IN was the place to go to have babies. My dad was Lowell Kunce and my mom is Betty Kunce. I smile when I think of the day I was born. I was born earlier in the day but my dad had to go bowling later that night and my mom still talks about that...that dad wasn't there in the evening because he had bowling. But in 1955, men did not take part in the birthing process but he was there when I was born but not later that evening. She reminds me of that every day on my birthday.

My brother is Kent Kunce and he is 5 and half years younger than I am. When he came along I thought "Am I going to like this baby boy?" but he and I grew to be very close and we have a very good relationship today. He lives in Evansville now with his family, his wife and two children. We have a great family and it was a great family to grow up in.

My dad was from northern Indiana. His dad was a United Methodist minister....a Methodist minister then and they moved around and that is how he met my mom. So he was kind of a misplaced Midwesterner who ended up spending rest of his life in Marshall. Dad worked in Terre Haute for 40 years and my mom was pretty much a stay-at-home mom. Which wasn't unusual during that time period but she wouldn't have thought of doing anything else. She did work a little bit for the Western Auto and it was located where the correct library is.

D: You mentioned your dad working for Hillman's; did he start at Bigwood's?

C: I don't think so.

D: I know that he road with Herb Shaffner and he started at Bigwood's.

C: From the best of my knowledge, he started at Hillman's. With mom being at home, she was always there for us and I think that that is something that children miss out on nowadays. She never

knew who we would bring home with us, whether I needed to prepare lunch for more than just me or what, but she always managed to get something out of the refrigerator and provide for whoever was there. The other kids loved to go home with me because mom always made them feel so at home.

The first house that I remember living in was on Locust Street. It was 209 Locust St. Everything that we did, I could walk, to come uptown or to the library or the Candy Kitchen. And we had a great neighborhood of children. Paul Martin, the pharmacist, and his family lived right next door to us, we kids stayed out until the street lights came on, rode our bicycles and just had good times. We lived there until I was in 2nd grade. And then my family purchased the house on Cherry Street that was owned by Jim and Virginia Claypool. Jim was the insurance guru and Virginia was the home ec teacher. The Cherry Street house has been our home since 1963.

Now that neighborhood was totally different. It was older people but in its way it had great advantages too. I spent a lot of time sitting on the porch swings of our neighbors. I would walk around the corner and have lemonade with Zella Saiter.

D: Do you think those two neighborhoods have changed much?

C: Absolutely, I drive down Locust Street and visually, it doesn't look the same at all. There are a few families in the neighborhood where mom lives now but there was an apartment across the street then that isn't there now.

D: Where did you go to school?

C: I went to South School and that was a nice part of being on Cherry Street because I could just walk to school. Then for Junior High and High School there was a bus. Then when I got a car I could drive to school. I graduated from High School in 1973 and back then there weren't a lot of options for girls for when we grew up. I always thought I wanted to be a teacher. All my teachers were good, but Ruth Fredenberger was my second grade teacher and she impressed me the most. She did things with her students like taking them home and did nice things that teachers can't do today. She was so easy going and kind.

D: Was there a favorite subject that you had?

C: I always loved reading. Still do. And my mom says that Debbie Martin, our neighbor, taught me to read before I went to school. And that is probably true because she was older than me and we would play school so I probably did know how to read early.

D: Was there a particular situation or event that made you want to become a teacher?

C: Yes, with Miss Fredenberger, she sang in class, we did wonderful things that weren't "book" learning and that really made a difference with me. So Indiana State was the most logical place to go for education and mom and dad let me live on campus. And I was a Sparkette which gave me a lot of adventures but once I got into my core classes, I really enjoyed learning how to be a teacher.

D: Was Marthann there then?

C: She sure was, and Jim. They don't make them like Marthann, and for them to be able to take care of 40 teenage girls.... it was a big job. When I graduated, I thought where do I go for a job? So there was a 2nd grade opening in Marshall so I had an interview with Mr. Eaglin for that job and he hired me. I took it as a one year position because the teacher was taking a one year leave of absence. So I taught with Lela Pancake and Daralea Smith. We taught the first year in the new wing of North School. That would have been 1977 when the new wing was added on. So I taught that year then I thought, what am I going to do the next year? So I started applying other places and I accepted a position in Avon, IN. So the day that I went to tell Mr. Eaglin that I had accepted another position. And he said he was so sorry, that he had just found out that the teacher on leave was not coming back. So I took that as a sign that it time for me to get out and do something else for a while. So I went ahead and taught in Indiana for five years, started my Master's Degree at ISU and taught, met my husband, Lee, at ISU, he was working on his PhD in geography and I was taking a class across the hall and it just kinda grew from there.

We were together about 5 years and he took a job in Canada on Queen Charlotte Island. His family was from Vancouver. So the first year he went there, I thought how is this going to work out? My mom and dad had an interesting experience. That year my brother got married on August 6th and Lee was coming back for the wedding. And Lee said that we just as well get married because he wasn't getting any younger, and I agreed and we got married on August 4th and then two days later my brother got married. That was in 1983.

So Lee and I loaded up my beautiful blue 1978 Camaro, and took everything I could and drove out to the west coast of Canada. We took a ferry up to the Queen Charlotte Island, he was doing research and I did tutoring and substituting and some other things. We were there a year. After that we moved into Canadian Rockies, up in the Banff area and then we moved to Saskatchewan for five years where Lee taught at the University. That is where both of our boys were born. Lowell was born 29 years ago today and then Andrew was born three years later. Although we had great adventures and it was wonderful, Lee said to me after the boys were born that he felt we needed to get back to the Midwest and Marshall because the quality of life was better with having family close.

D: What did you teach in Saskatchewan?

C: Lee was the one teaching and he was in the Geography Dept. When we came backI didn't want to be the "whiner" wife and say I wanted to go home when in my heart and mind I did. So we did move back and that was in 1990. So we have kinda come full circle. Our boys have of course, gone to school in Marshall and have graduated and are doing well. Lee has been busy doing a variety of things, teaching, volunteering, sales. When we came back, I started out teaching at Lincoln Trail College, I taught adult education. I taught GED classes, I taught Title One reading at north and south schools. And I taught fourth grade. So it's been a busy few years and eight years ago I took the job of principal at North School. So I came pretty much full circle with my own personal life, I started out in 1977 as a teacher there and coming back as the principal in the school where I taught. And I think that is pretty

cool.

D: Have you ever looked back and said it would be nice to have stayed in Canada?

C: There are times that I think about it, but, no. Again, our family is close and the quality of life we have here, the medical advantages we have here, the quality of schools, we wanted our boys to know their grandparents and Lee's parents had passed away and he was an only child, so there wasn't any family there.

D: I was going to ask if he had any family there.

C: No, he didn't. It just was a great place to come back to. Our home is one Route 1 south and was built in 1904 and the Finkbiners were the previous owners, and before them the Imle's lived there. It is a brick home with a few acres and woods that we enjoy totally. We have had animals that have become part of our lives, inside and out. The boys loved growing up there and I never worried about them either. They loved to get on four wheelers or go fishing or just play ball in the yard....life was good.

D: As a youngster, did you have hobbies?

C: Well, I played piano and I started lessons probably in 2nd grade. I took lessons from Ruth Tarman in Martinsville. It's interesting, someone asked me how I did something on the piano and I told them I had one of the best teachers there ever was. Then I took lessons in Terre Haute too for a short time but that is probably the hobby I enjoyed most. Mom always said when there was work to do I would go play the piano to get out of jobs.

D: Do you find that after a difficult day, you can sit down at the piano and play and relax?

C: Absolutely. I play the piano for our church, Emmanuel United Methodist Church, which is another place we have come full circle. My grandparents, my mom, everyone grew up there, and that again in just coming back home. A place where our faith grew also.

D: Did you participate in any music events at ISU?

C: I did not; I did the dance and marching part of it. I, of course, played the clarinet in our high school band; I sang in the choirs, music for me is kind of an enjoyment and relaxer.

D: Did you ever think of music as a career?

C: I never thought I was good enough and maybe I didn't want to work hard enough at it.

D: I think generally, it's hard to make a living at music.

C: So my music was just for my enjoyment, I played at church, weddings, and that kind of things.

D: How about your boys, did they participate in any music?

C: They did, they took piano lessons from Diane Reed, Andrew stayed with it through high school, Lowell played the trumpet and Andrew played percussion. They will sometimes sit at the piano and play duets.

D: You obviously have a piano at home.

C: I do.

D: You mentioned working on your Master's Degree at ISU. Was there a time when you thought you might want to try another career?

C: The only other thing I thought of is being a travel agent and I don't really call that a career. I think it's because I wanted to travel. But that job never happened.

D: Have you ever gone back to Canada where you lived?

C: We have not, we have kept in contact with people from there but we haven't been back there. We keep saying we are going. We have thoroughly enjoyed travelling the United States and have enjoyed things close by and we enjoy things "Lincoln" and Springfield. It doesn't matter how many times we go there we are still in awe of it. To think that Lincoln was here in Marshall, just across the street.

D: Is there a favorite place you like to visit?

C: We love Illinois, we love southern Illinois, down on the Ohio River and we like to just sit and watch the barges go by.

D: Have you been to the Garden of the Gods?

C: We have, and the other direction, we like Chicago, wouldn't want to live there, but we love the museums, the lake front, we feel like everything we need is right here in Illinois. It amazes me what Marshall has.

D: And some people don't realize that.

C: That is exactly right.

D: Your two boys have ventured out on their own.

C: Yes, they have. Lowell went to McKendree College and got a sociology degree in criminal justice and with a management minor. Now has he used that? No, it's okay. He worked for Floyd Pancake at State Farm Insurance and enjoyed that for several years, he has worked on farms for people, done hard physical labor, and the last three years has been at Marathon Refinery and loves his job. I think he has many possible opportunities with them and he is a hard worker. Andrew is completing his PhD in chemistry at the University of Kansas. He did his undergrad at ISU and this fall he is going to Seoul, Korea to study a semester abroad at the National University of Seoul. So he is doing wonderful things as well and he will finish his PhD when he gets back and then we'll see what it next.

D: Is he thinking about teaching?

C: I think that has always been in the back of his mind. He knows he can do that, I think his real love is research. His PhD will be in Biology, chemistry and physics combined.

D: Do you ever think one or both of them would come back to Marshall?

C: I think about it, but Andrew's opportunities are not here. I encourage them to be within a ten hour drive.

D: Do you hope from a parent's standpoint that they would come home?

C: From a parents standpoint, I think it would be a positive thing but I don't want to say to them I would like for them to come home. It will be interesting to see how it all goes.

D: Do they keep in close touch?

C: Yes, they do and that is one thing that has changed so much since we were young people. Communication has changed so much. I can't imagine how it was sending a child off to war all those years ago. It is so different now. There are times that technology can get in the way but what would we do without it?

D: Coming back to teaching, I am sure you have seen some changes in teaching the last 10-15 years. What are some significant things?

C: I think about our community here and I think that the family unit that we grew up in has changed. Now children live in multi-households with siblings from other families. I am not faulting parents, but I do think that that solidness and that unity is not like it used to be. I think the economics make a difference. We talk about the support that kids get from home. You see a difference in the number of parents that come to events and open houses at school. As the kids get older the support gets less and less. And that is tough and I don't think that children get the same kind of guidance and conversation like they used to. I tell parents all the time to keep talking to your kids, keep up that conversation with them.

D: I get very irritated when everyone is texting walking down the street, driving, they don't seem to even know where they are sometimes. Is this a good thing?

C: No, I think not, I think that you are exactly right. Things that are put out there that can't be taken back. I tend to be a person who reads into the written word so I am better off talking to someone face to face. And I think that that is one place where children are missing out. I don't think that they are being read to like we used to. I don't think they are given opportunities like they used to. And I think those things are so important.

D: Being a teacher and all, what do you think about schools who are not teaching cursive writing?

C: That is a skill that we still teach but it is not given as much time as it used to be. But we still teach

it and expect our kids to use cursive writing.

D: How can they fill out application, maybe they use computers for that, how do they write a check, I'm sure that should be a part of an education.

C: And to me, your signature is you, even if it's hard to read.

D: What is the difference in education nowadays with computers?

C: It has opened up the world to Marshall. We have teachers who have done Skyping with a sled dog musher in Alaska and the kids are sitting there watching it on a big screen TV and asking him questions back and forth, it's wonderful. It gives us immediate information, it gives us feedback, not always the best, we do monitor that but it is amazing that they can go on a virtual fieldtrip and that part is good.

D: What about the use of an encyclopedia, do they even print them anymore?

C: We still have them in our library, I don't know if they are still being printed. We also have the encyclopedia online, like the library has. We still use our textbooks and we supplement with the Internet or the iPad so I feel like we are getting the best of both worlds.

D: I read awhile back that there was a community somewhere that opened a new library with no books.

C: I can't imagine that. Up at North School, we have a fantastic library, Karen Heighton is the librarian and she has developed the ability to download books from the cloud. And children are turned on by that but they also love books and they will carry them and the thicker the book the more they like them.

D: Do any of them see eBooks as the only book there is?

C: No, I don't see that. I think it's kind of a cool trend to read an eBook but I don't see them only wanting to read them in that form.

D: Do you think there is a trend maybe in colleges to not even have an instructor up in front of the classroom?

C: I think we will see more and more of that, when we took what we called a correspondence course from ISU back in the 70's, I got a big packet of papers and mailed assignments back I think that was the start of it. To think that you can interact with people like that online, talk to your professor, it's not the same as being in a class and when I did correspondence classes back then, I didn't do as well as in a traditional classroom.

D: There are so many online universities that offer degrees from only online classes and I wonder if that is really an education.

C: I agree with you. I guess we have to be open-minded and say that it is.

D: Was there a particular world event that influenced you?

C: Absolutely, there were several things. One of the things I remember is being worried about when I was a child was Cuba. The basement of the courthouse being a fallout shelter. I remember asking a lot of questions about that. Of course, the death of President Kennedy, I was in third grade in Ann Kile's class. And we had old black and white tv's and someone came running down the hall and Mrs. Kile got the tv on and we watched for the rest of the day. I don't think that anybody who experienced that will ever forget that.

D: That does seem to be an event that everyone remembers where they were and what they were doing.

C: And of course the Challenger, that was a major event and 911, I was teaching fourth grade and that was a frightening time. We did not share what was going on with the younger children but as teachers we were all trying to get information. Another big event was the first man on the moon, I remember where I was then too, we were on vacation out in Colorado and we read about it in the newspaper.

D: Is there an individual that has influenced you greatly?

C: Probably not one person, but of course parents and grandparents. They were and are people of faith, strength and love.

D: Is there some modern convenience that you think you just couldn't live without?

C: My car? I am not that much into microwaves, we don't watch much TV. But my car, I really need.

D: What would you tell someone overseas about Marshall and why it's a good place to live?

C: Typically if someone asked me something like that, I tell people that we are centrally located, I consider us a small rural community, I think that we have great schools, I think we have a number of people who want to keep the values upon which Marshall was founded. And that is what has made Marshall what it is today. The main street looks as nice today as it ever has. And most of the time our people get along with each other, and everyone has a say in what happens here.

D: Are there particular stores that you remember?

C: Martins Drug Store, we loved to go in there. The Candy Kitchen, always loved going in there for various treats, the Dime Store was a haven to go in to, a department store with stuff all in one place, Finkbiners had a clothing store which was great, my mom would shop at Hedges all the time, Tom's Restaurant, the best dinner rolls anywhere, and the best pies. Wal-Mart might have taken some businesses away but I think we still have the small town feel and small town businesses like we used to.

D: It's been a real pleasure to hear about your life and thank you so much for taking the time to give your oral history. The stories will be here in the library for future generations to hear and read.

C: Thank you, Damian, It's fun to know that there are these oral histories that so many have participated in giving.