



VERDIGRIS
PROJECT

KBMF & BUTTE-SILVER BOW ARCHIVES

KITTY BRILLIANT

The Verdigris Project

A partnership between KBMF 102.5FM and The Butte-Silver Bow Archives.

With funding from The National Endowment for the Humanities, the Montana History Foundation, members of the Butte America Foundation, and SARTA.

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Oral History Transcript of Kitty Brilliant

Interviewer: Clark Grant

Interview Date: January 11th, 2019

Location: KBMF Office (Carpenters Union Hall)

Transcribed: January 2021 by Adrian Kien

Clark Grant: OK. Let's reach back a bit and tell me what you've learned about your grandparents in the course of all this research.

Kitty Brilliant Well, what I learned about my grandparents . . . I knew a fair amount because my mother was wonderful. I loved to see the pictures and that. I think everybody has a drawer that is full of pictures. I don't have a drawer that is full of pictures because my mother did. I made a vow to myself that I wouldn't do that. So I undid 57 albums of pictures on paper that had acid in them and redid the albums. But anyway, I used to say to my mom, "Now, who's this?" And she was wonderful. She would tell me. And she loved taking pictures also. So I knew a fair amount about my grandfather and my great Uncle John, who came and lived with us for the last maybe four or five months of his life. He was dying of cancer. And I loved this man. And I found out, interestingly enough, about 1992, maybe about five years before my mother died. I said, where did you ever get the name Denise? Because that's my first name. And she said, Oh, Uncle John. And I said, Uncle John? And she said his middle name was Dennis. I said, You know, if you would have told me that I would have loved the name Denise.

As it was, I hated the name Denise. So I loved being Kitty. But anyway, I would ask a lot of questions. So I knew that they had come from Ireland. I knew that he had come from Ireland. She came from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Her family came that far and then they came to Butte. And then her mother ran a boarding house up here on one of the streets up here in Dublin Gulch. And my grandfather came. He was a miner. And of course, they stayed there. He lived there. And he was about 6'4". And she was like all of maybe 4'11". She was a little tiny thing. And my mom used to tell the story about how he would pick her up and put her up on top of the piano. And she would cry because she couldn't get down off the piano. But I knew those kinds of stories. I knew about how my mother was just two when my grandfather died. And she came from a family of nine. One child had died from scarlet fever, something. Somebody came to the house and brought a bug of some sort. And Frances died when he was a baby. But I loved the stories that my mother told about living on North Wyoming Street. In fact, the house is still up there. It's the yellow and green house. And my granddad was Jeremiah Daniel Harrington. And he was a blacksmith. So he was called a Jerry the Gow because that's what they called blacksmiths.

Grant: A Gow?

Brilliant A Gow, G-O-W. And he did that in Ireland. And then he and my Uncle John. And they both worked in the mines, in Alleheys (sp?). And so they came over in the late eighteen hundreds because the work was running out and the younger brother stayed there, and so he's the one who ended up inheriting the farm and stuff like that, and the farm is still there. And we have been there a couple of times. They really had a very nice place. I always thought, well, maybe they

were Irish and lived through the famine, but they didn't. They were called lace Irish or something. It wasn't like they had a lot of money because they had a lot of kids and stuff. But, you know, they had some land. So my granddad and my uncle came over and they worked in the mine. Well, then my Uncle John moved to Rochester, Nevada. And he mined there. And then when he was sick with cancer, he came back and he lived, God knows why, he came and lived with us. We had a little house over on Woolman Street, and my mother had six kids. I think that's the kind of thing that happens. They always say, if you want something done, if you need help, ask a busy person. And all of us in the family didn't follow that thing. But I'm very much like my mother that way. But the man came and lived with us. And my granddad died when Mama was two. It was in October of . . . When was the Speculator Mine thing?

Grant: 17, I think.

Brilliant Well, he died at that time. I don't know what month it was, but it was right at that time. So I always say to people, no, he didn't die in the Speculator Mine thing. And his death certificate doesn't really say. I don't know why. It doesn't have anything there. But they got married at St. Pat's church and they lived up on Wyoming Street and they raised the nine children or the eight children who lived. My uncle Butch owned the grocery store across the street from the federal building. That was one of my favorite places to go. I loved it.

Grant: What was that called?

Brilliant It was called Harrington's Market. And Butch Harrington was his name and he was a butcher. And he drove his truck like a bat out of hell. And his son, Jim Harrington, who is my cousin, did a lot of work here at the Archives and that sort of thing. He has since died and his other son, Jerry, lives in Seattle. And my other uncle, Dan Harrington of Harrington surgical. Wonderful family. And good family memories of times with him. Now, my mom and dad . . . You started out asking me what I know about my grandparents. Anyway, my mother was the youngest of the family, so she ended up being the caretaker. She was the cook. She was the chief bottle washer. She did all the ironing. She did everything.

I've always thought she was kind of a slave in some ways. Because Aunt May and Aunt Kit were a good bit older than she was. So they left home. They were secretaries and did very well. And then my Uncle Dan, her brother, ended up being a doctor. My Uncle Dan, and then, of course, Butch moved out. And she took care of her mother. And there was another old guy named Mike Sullivan, who was a family friend. My mother, she could bake pies like you wouldn't believe. So could my father. And this guy would give her a quarter if she'd bake him a pie. I mean, just wonderful little stories about that. And she would leave the pie out on a rock outside the door so that he could get it. And it was just charming little stories. And she went to Central and her mother died, very sadly, when she was a junior in high school.

Well, here's what happened. Okay. They lived on Wyoming Street and the older brothers and sisters thought the neighborhood was going down the tubes. It was becoming the hood, if you will. And so they moved, my uncle Dan, who is just a couple of years older than Mama. And Mom and Dan and my grandmother moved over to the West Side. Well, my grandmother didn't want to be on the West Side. So she would get up every day and she would walk over here and

she'd spend the day visiting with her friends and then she'd walk back up again. She was just as stubborn, I guess, as all get out. Well, she got double pneumonia. It's very sad. And she died when my mother was a junior. And that really had a tremendous effect on my mom.

And there was this very, very kind family that took her in to take care of her when she had this nervous breakdown. And they were incredibly kind. Well, then she graduated from high school at Central. And she used to talk about how she and Millie would skip school and go to the five cent movie. Oh. Honest to God, she skipped school. "Don't you even think about skipping school or, you know, dead meat." But anyway, she was a really incredibly bright woman. I mean, she did crosswords in ink as long as I can remember. I never saw her do them in pencil. And she played the piano by ear and could read music.

She was really talented, but she was horribly shy. Incredibly shy. She just couldn't do it in front of people. And of course, I started singing when I was four years old and never stopped. But she just was shy and so it was hard for her to get out. Now, my great story about my mom that I just love is she and Mildred Schoop. Anyway, she and momma were out at the Columbia Gardens one day, and it was after my mom, I think, was out of high school. And these two guys were talking to them and this guy borrowed a dime from my mother to ride the trolley car home. And that night, my mom had a date with another guy, and my mother really never dated. But she had a date with this guy and he was gorgeous. Oh, one of my friends in high school ended up being her father. But anyway, my father drove up in his younger brother's car. My father was working in the mines by this time.

My father went through junior high down here at Washington. And I did not know this until I started doing all these albums. He was one of the top athletes in his class. And you know, I've got it here. He was one of the top athletes in his class. In fact, he said to me one day years ago, he said, you know, I was talking about Dr. Duncan. The doctors, Duncan, they were podiatrists. And he said, I used to play them with them when I was young. I thought he lived in the neighborhood with them. And I didn't ask. But I discovered that he played basketball with them. And my father was the best player on the team.

Grant: What year would that have been that he was playing?

Brilliant That was back in 1926. I've got like the clippings from the newspaper that were in an envelope that I found when my mother died.

Grant: Wow.

Brilliant Isn't that something?

Grant: This is really a great, you know, compendium you've put together here. This book.

Brilliant The people at the school district were so helpful because I wanted to know if, you know, after they completed the junior high, the common school diploma. They took a test to see if they were gonna go to Butte high. And now my father never took that test. I had a woman

down there check. He never took the test. He just started working in the mines. He couldn't have gone down the mine because he was only about 14 years old.

Grant: And if you didn't take this test or didn't pass it, you just went to work?

Brilliant No, he had to go to work because his mother and father were, in quotes, divorced. I'm not even sure they were ever married, to tell you the truth. My grandfather on that side of the family always looked like an old man. Like an old man. All of his life, I think. And my sister once told me he was a horse thief. Now, I don't know if he was or not, but he may have been because he grew up in the Gallatin Valley. He did get horses, I think. Anyway, he did get horses for the military. OK, so I don't know who he stole them from. I don't know. Well, he never told me and my father never told me so. He didn't go to school. My cousin, Jim Harrington, Curly, the one who used to do all the research up here, said that somewhere along the line, he came across something that indicated that my father worked in the mine yard cleaning up stuff until he was old enough to go down the mine. But he started going down the mine very early. I think as young as he could possibly go.

Grant: Would that have been 16 or 18?

Brilliant I have his Social Security card and it's in copper. Isn't that interesting? He went down very early and he absolutely loved mining. He ate, lived and breathed mining.

Grant: What did he love about it?

Brilliant Well, he could see his progress. He could see what he was doing. He was kind of a different kind of person. Sunday we'd go to church, we'd come home to a clean house. Everything would be clean and breakfast would be made. He was really an amazing man.

Grant: He stayed home from church?

Brilliant Oh, he didn't go to church. He wasn't a Catholic. He was a Heinze 57 or something. But he became a Catholic at 65. Believe it or not. Which I thought was hysterical.

Grant: Did JFK have something to do with that?

Brilliant No, I just think he thought, "Well, OK, that's enough. I give." But nobody ever pressured him to do it. Nobody cared. But he was a kind of miner. He was a shift bus for a very long time that I can remember. Because I was always interested in it. I really wanted to go down the mine. I must have been crazy because I'm terribly claustrophobic. But I never got to go because back in those days, you didn't get to go. And I also wanted to learn how to shoot a gun. I didn't do that. I also wanted to learn how to fly a plane. I haven't done that. Next life. I'll do that. But anyway, he would get to the mine. He'd always get there early. And then he would go down and check his level and make sure everything is. He'd check it all out to see what was going on. And then he'd come up and then he'd go down with the guys and that. And he was the last person to leave his shift. He just was a very conscientious person.

And he'd talk about the mines and he'd talk about the people. And he worked the Mountain Con, mile down. He was the shift boss. He said he was one of the only people who could stand the heat down there. Oh, because it was hot. And most of the people that worked under him actually were Mexicans and Chinese. And he loved them. They were hard workers and, you know, he just loved them. You could just see that he loved this job. And then unfortunately, when he turned 48, when I was a junior in high school, the Anaconda Company, in their great wisdom, let go, I want to say six or nine because I can't remember if it was six or nine.

I remember coming home. I was a junior in high school and they had given him his choice. He and several other men, they could start again at the bottom. They could take a \$4000 cash settlement. Or they could retire on \$150 a month and keep their benefits. And I remember Daddy and Mama sitting at the table. We lived on West Woolman Street, 900 block. And I remember them sitting there talking about it. And I was old enough to, you know, sit down and listen. And they were trying to make this decision and they decided to do that because then he'd have his medical benefits. But if he got another job, the amount of money would go down to \$75. And he still had three children at home.

Grant: What year would this have been?

Brilliant 1960. It was after the 59 strike. So it was well it might have been 59 or 60. I was a junior in high school. It might have been 59, the beginning of my junior year in high school. But anyway he went to work for my Uncle Dan, driving the truck and fixing things and doing stuff like that.

Grant: Do you have a sense of how many employees got that same?

Brilliant It seems to me that when they were talking about it, there were six or nine men who were experiencing that. And I've been hoping that one of these days you would get that information here at the archives and maybe they have it. And I just don't know.

Grant: It wasn't a companywide thing then. It was pretty isolated.

Brilliant It was. You see, my father had worked for them for 30 years and they would have to pay him a heck of a retirement. If he retired, if he worked for another 20 years.

Grant: So that method of firing people right before they're about to, you know, that's an old practice.

Brilliant They were sloughing him off. And my father was heartbroken. Heartbroken. And he never really did recover well from that. And eventually when I graduated from high school, one of my uncles had moved from Ennis, Montana down to Denver and talked him into coming down there. And he had a gas station, a Texaco gas station and talked my dad into running the gas station and he was going to drive a Texaco truck. Well, eventually, my dad got his own gas station. And in his own way, he was the top, makes me cry, he had the top Texaco station in the state of Colorado. I've got pictures of him. I mean, he was a very hard worker. And he was honest. You know, there were a lot of people . . . I know someone who said that a good deal of

their house was built from things that the man took out of the mine. My father didn't take a pencil out. No. That's it. Honesty. The beauty. The beauty of growing up. There were some tough times in this family, too. But the beauty of growing up in this family was, is they had very strong morals, very strong. You do what is right because it's right, not because you might get caught. And I got quite a lot of time. I mean, I spent a lot of time in the principal's office. What can I say? I did. But it was really quite amazing. And my dad was born in the Gallatin Valley and then moved over to Butte. And momma was born right up here. I think she was born right up there in the house on Wyoming there.

Grant: On Wyoming?

Brilliant Let's see.

Grant: This is so great that you have this.

Brilliant It shows on her birth certificate, number 1092. She was born right here. And right up the street. These are all pictures, and I love this. I got this from there.

Grant: What is that there?

Brilliant This is the pension when my grandfather died. My grandmother got a pension. This is 1917 to 1918. And Mary Harrington. Her name was really Mamie, but they called her Mary. 708 North Wyoming Street. And she got 40 dollars for care of children. OK, and here's some for Helen. My mother, Helen Margaret. We call her Dolly, though. She was Dolly. OK. You know how she got the name Dolly?

Grant: Everyone has a nickname in your family.

Brilliant Well, it wasn't a very big house back then. In fact, I think it was a very small house. And then they had another house that when the [inaudible] bought it. And they had to have a second place for the kids to sleep, I think. Or something like that as I understand. But anyway, my mom was asleep on the bed off of the parlor, the front parlor. And my uncle Dan who was two years older than she was, was there and somebody came to visit. And I don't remember who Momma told me it was. And my uncle Dan took her by the leg and pulled her off of the bed. I mean, he didn't know what. He took her off the bed and dragged her out into the living room and said, "Here's my dolly."

That was it. She's Dolly. She was Dolly. Isn't that funny? I just love those kinds of things. I love those little things. I love those little sides, you know, that make people real, you know? That's what this is. And my uncle Dan and then William who was a real estate person and an insurance person here in town. And my Uncle Clarence moved to California years ago and worked in Long Beach, a longshore, along the thing. And my Uncle Bern ended up. He was what they called back in those days, a child prodigy. He graduated from Central and graduated from Carroll College at a very young age, and then went on to become a doctor. And I remember mom saying that he came back to Butte. I said, "Well, why did he move?" She said, "Well, he came back to Butte to practice and nobody would go to him because he was so young." He was just a kid.

Grant: They didn't trust a young doctor.

Brilliant So he ended up moving to Tacoma, Washington and lived there. And I was telling you Mom was out at the Columbia Gardens and this guy borrowed a dime. So that night she had a date with this other guy. The one who was gorgeous. Not that my dad was, you know, scary or anything. But this guy was "oh" and he was an incredible athlete and all that kind of stuff.

They had met at the Holland Rink, which is down where the Safeway is at the bottom of Montana Street. Well, anyway, my dad comes driving up in his younger brother's, who was the spoiled one, his car. And so my mother went out with him and that was the end of it. And they ended up eloping. They got married in Anaconda at the courthouse. It really is kind of a cute story. They went and got married in Anaconda. And they got married over in Anaconda. But now here's the sad part. She married my father. His family was fine with it. My mother was already signed up to go to St Mary's College, Notre Dame.

Her older brothers and sisters, because she had taken care of their mother for such a long time, were going to send her to school at St. Mary's, Notre Dame. And I remember her saying she was very excited. She went to the World's Fair in Chicago. And she was there and she wrote a letter home to my father because they were already married, but nobody knew. And my uncle's girlfriend, the one who owned the car, his girlfriend found the letter and exposed the whole thing. So then her family was mad as hell. They were furious. Oh, they were livid. So they had a really hard time accepting my father. I mean, first of all, he wasn't a Catholic. Anyway, I just think that stuff is a lot of hogwash. And I got a very strong Catholic background. But, it was just silly. So for all those years, my mother went to twelve o'clock Mass every Sunday up at the Immaculate Conception.

And I didn't know, but had never received communion because she wasn't married in the church. But she eventually. When my uncle was getting married, she and my dad went to the rectory and had their marriage blessed so that she could go to communion again. I mean, there are just so many things about that. This isn't the time for a big, long discussion about the Catholic Church because I still go to church. And I go to church because I choose to go to church not because I feel like I'm going to die if I don't go to church on Sunday, or if I die on Monday, I'll go to hell. I don't believe any of that stuff. But, I mean, it just was sad to me that there are so many people who were turned away because of some person making a rule that I just I'm not sure that Jesus would agree with.

Grant: Indeed. It doesn't really follow the teachings.

Brilliant No, it doesn't, to me. It doesn't to me. But then I know that I'm a lot different than a lot of other people are. I mean, I believe in reincarnation. What can I say? And I really strongly believe in it. But anyway, that must have been very hard for my mother. And I think it was hard on my dad, too. And he did love her. Oh, my God, he loved her so much. And not that they always got along. They had their ups and downs. But a really funny story was my mother had great legs. But she loved wearing pants. You can see all those pictures from when she was in high school. She loved wearing pants and slacks. And so she would wear jeans. My dad would

go to work in the morning. He'd leave for the mine and she'd get dressed after she did her crossword and had coffee and that. And then she would wear her jeans and she'd clean the whole house everyday. Everyday. I can tell you what she did everyday. Monday, she cleaned the entire house. And she did all the washing on Tuesday. She cleaned the house and she did all the ironing. I mean, it was just like that. This is the way it was.

And our house - eight people living in this little dinky house. And it was spotless. I mean, it was always spotless. And both of them were that way, really. They were very neat. Very clean. Yeah. And but anyway, she would wear these jeans. Well, if he'd catch her with the jeans on, he didn't like the jeans and he'd take them and he'd go out and throw them in the garbage. He'd throw them in the garbage and she'd wait awhile and she'd go get them and bring them back and she'd put them in a box. She had a box behind the door in their bedroom. And she would stick them way down at the bottom of that so that he wouldn't find them. I mean, it's like this little game. And we used to just laugh, but she really did. And when she lived in Colorado and pantsuits came in. Oh, my goodness sakes.

Grant: What did he have against jeans?

Brilliant He liked her legs. And she really did. She was a pretty woman. She was a beautiful woman. And she looked good in a pantsuit, actually. But he liked her legs. Anyway, my mom and dad eloped and they got married and it was eventually blessed. When they first lived together or after they got married, my grandmother, my father's mother owned a place up on William Street and they lived in that. And they lived in this house. And they had three children - my brother Darrel, and two years later, my sister Donna, two years later, my brother Robbie. And when she was pregnant with me, the doctor said, "You may not go home until you have a house with running water." Because she had no running water for the first three years. There it is there. OK. And so the doctor said, "You may not go home with this baby until you have running water." So my uncle Butch, the grocer, right up the street here, went and found this house over on Woolman Street and they moved in so that I could go home there. I was born in the Murray Hospital and they took me out there and I lived there until the day I left to go to the convent.

Grant: And the Murray was just right here?

Brilliant The Murray was right here. Yeah. Murray was right here. And the best thing about it was that it was a great neighborhood. I know other people will tell you that their neighborhood was the best. But I'm going to tell you, it just couldn't hold a candle to West Woolman. There was always something going on. And we had kids who came from the HUB addition. Denny Shea, who was in my class at Central, came for and he lived at St. Pat's. He used to come over all the time when we were in high school. He'd come walk and he lived over right over here on maybe Idaho. And he would walk over to our neighborhood. We had a fun group of people.

Grant: When you say there was always something going on, do you mean like games?

Brilliant First of all, there was a nice combination of boys and girls. And in my age group, there was Johnny Lavelle and Johnny Birmingham and Jimmy Carden. And you know Monica who runs the Irish store. Well, her cousins are the Carden's. And they lived up in the next block. But

Jimmy Carden was one of the gang. When we started in grade school at IC. Okay, when we graduated, there were 48 kids, but there were a lot of kids from the neighborhood who were in my class. And so we'd get together and we became, as one of my friends said to me one day, a pack. And I moved back here in 2004 and rejoined the pack. Several of them have died, unfortunately. But Shar Gillespie, Dr. Gillespie's daughter, she was one of the group. Bev Swanson, her dad was a pharmacist down right down the street at the terminal. But they were a wonderful group of people.

And we would get together and we'd play games and we'd do stuff like that. One of my favorite things was the Lavelle's that lived next door to us. And Johnny was my age and Liz was a year older. And their father bought a World Book Encyclopedia. Now, their dad was a rope man and they just had three kids. We had one of the largest families with six kids. And my father being a miner. It was tough. But anyway, they had a World Book Encyclopedia. One of my favorite things that we would do. This really sounds stupid, but we would sit and we'd take a book out and then we'd look up a country or we'd look up a city or something, and we'd sit and read about it, and then we'd talk about it. And so I became absolutely driven to see these places. My whole life, I kept thinking, I gotta get out of Butte, I gotta get out of Butte. So I did get out of Butte.

Grant: You mentioned a convent?

Brilliant When I graduated from high school. Now I should back this up and tell you that a couple of things about grade school that were wonderful was the IC tournament, which I'm sure you know about.

Grant: In fact, I don't.

Brilliant You don't know anything about Butte. How could you possibly not know about the IC tournament? Alright, at the end of January, every year, the Catholic parishes. They had a tournament at the IC Hall. There was a hall over by the IC. You have the big white church. And just south of that, just across Caledonia from that, there was this beautiful hall. It was a beautiful white building and they had all kinds of things there every year. They'd have a big bazaar. And after first communion, they had a first communion breakfast for us. The lady served a half of a grapefruit and a donut. And we used to have first Friday breakfast and you paid. You got to have a donut and a cup of cocoa. Well, anyway, that was downstairs. This was the floor of the hall. Beautiful building. And all the Catholic schools. And then Saint Peter and St. Paul's from Anaconda would come. The end of January.

And then in between the games at halftime, they'd have entertainment. And I started singing there when I was four years old. I mean, great memories. Great memories. But anyway, this was the hall. And when I was in eighth grade. I've never seen another picture that anybody took that had kids in it. But this is all the kids that would come and sit. They'd put their signs up for their teams. And that's when I was a cheerleader and my mother took this picture. And she didn't cut anybody's head off. She usually cut people's heads off. But it was a great picture. And then this is the IC school, what it looked like when we went. Well, it changed several years after. Well, right after I graduated, they made an addition to that. But some great memories. You form these relationships in school and then so many of them have just hung on. I mean, I still do things all

the time with people that I went through grade school with. I have a rosary group that meets every Thursday. Shar Gillespie, whose father was my pediatrician and who is one of the pack, had pancreatic cancer in 2004, 2005. And I'm a doer. I said, "I have to do something. I have to do something." So I called the girls and said, "Hey, do you want to say the rosary?" And they said, "Sure." And we've been going ever since. Every Thursday at my house.

We started out at St. Ann's Church. But then if there was a funeral, I had to call everybody. So we just do it at my house. And if I'm not there, if something happens, and I'm gone out of town, they come in the back door and they go sit down. They say the rosary. It's cool.

Grant: What happened to this building, if I may ask?

Brilliant Well, what happened to that building? Now, Bob McCarthy is the one who told me because I was gone. I was gone for 43 years. OK. And came back. In fact, they did a big article about us in the newspaper which I thought was funny. There were four of us who moved back in less than two years and somebody had something in the newspaper and they said, has anybody else moved back? So I called. I said, "Well, I have. And several of my friends." So they ended up doing an article. But Bob McCarthy told me that he had been to a wedding there. And the next day, one of the priests looked out the window and said, "Oh, somebody left the lights on." And they went over and the roof had completely collapsed because it was a flat roof, you know. And when they repaired the roof, instead of really redoing it, they just layered it and a big thing as snow . . . So it just . . . And it was a wonderful building. Wonderful building. And when I moved back here, I never realized this.

This was a big deal to me because I got to sing. I mean, that was why I thought it was cool. I don't know anything about basketball. Not very much. Even when I played basketball. I was a lousy basketball player. I was pretty good at volleyball. But, I mean, really, I didn't know much about it, but I loved that. And it was a really big deal. And I moved back here and I started getting people together. I said, "Do you want to have lunch?" And we'd get a whole pack of people together. And they'd say, "Oh, you guys are so lucky over at the IC." And I went, "What planet were you on? We weren't rich." What they saw, I think, was the complex of the IC with all of those things. And it really was remarkable. But it was that IC tournament. It meant as much to the kids from St. Anne's, and St. Johns' and Holy Savior as it did to us. Everybody came. Everybody came. And the final entertainment for the very last one was the Boys Central Tumblers always finished it off. And they were wonderful to watch. They were. Oh, they were just amazing.

You know, not compared to today's gymnasts. But back in those days, they were really darn good. It was a wonderful place. And we had tennis courts and we had a practice field for football and that. In fact, I remember when I was in seventh grade and I looked out the window and there were a bunch of guys playing this thing that I'd never seen before. And they were hitting the ball with their head and they were the Hungarian refugees. We had a whole group of them come and one of the priests at IC was teaching them English and they were out there playing soccer. I was just amazed.

Grant: Hungarian refugees.

Brilliant Hungarian refugees from when they revolted. I want to say it was in '56. It was when I was in seventh grade. And we had a lot of families who took them in. In fact, one of my dearest friends from Caledonia, she lived right in back of me. They took in. She was an only child. And her family took in this young man. And they are still. They're family. You know, isn't that interesting? That's the beauty of Butte. People don't understand that when you talk about Butte. And having lived away for years, people would say something bad about Butte and I would say, "No. You don't know the people of Butte."

And I had a friend who was in my prayer group in Colorado Springs. I think there were six couples in it. And this one guy who was actually my doctor. We got together one Sunday night and he said, "I really hesitate to tell you this, Kitty, but I have to tell you. I'm going hunting. I'm going to Butte." And I went, "Oh, my God, you're going to have such a good time." He came back and he said, "You're right. You're absolutely right." He said, "Those people were unbelievably kind to us, took care of us." And I think there were three doctors who came up with three other friends. And I don't know who it was who took them hunting, but he said more than anything. "I was just so impressed with the people." It's interesting.

Grant: What do you think drives that?

Brilliant I think our parents had to work hard to get ahead and to provide for their children what they didn't have. And I will say I came from six and my three older brothers and sisters all had the opportunity to go to college. Now, my sister Donna, who is now living at the Beehive, unfortunately, but she was a genius and she went through Central, went to Saint Mary's College in Leavenworth, Kansas, got a double degree. Was it easy for my parents? No. She had scholarships and that, thank God. And my uncle Bern, the doctor, sent her a little bit of money every month, but they had to really work hard to get, you know. And you had to support one another. And you didn't have a lot to go traveling around. I never took a vacation in my life. And so what you did, you went camping or something. Some people, particularly for people like me who came from a family of six. So there were eight people.

And we always had somebody extra living with us either my aunt May or my cousin lived with us. One cousin who has now since died. She lived with us for several months because she was living in a horrible place and her father had moved to Arizona and her mother was off someplace else. And my mother, she just took somebody in. And so we always had a lot of people. And so we didn't get to take vacations very often. Maybe never. Never. But we'd go out to my uncle's. My uncle Dan had a place out at Elk Park and my uncle Butch did. So we'd go out there on a Sunday afternoon and have a great time. And so you just had to make the best of what you had. And when you did that, then we learned how to make fun. You know, we didn't have a pool back then. I can remember sitting on my back porch going, "Oh, God, I wish we had a swimming pool." I mean, we couldn't afford to go to Fairmont, Gregson at the time, and so we'd have to run through the hose. Big deal, you know. And that's why I was so big on this waterpark.

Grant: Right. I read a letter to the editor that you wrote in the paper about the pool.

Brilliant Obviously, I felt very strongly about it. And when we did that, what we did with our grandchildren was I wanted them to know that you have to contribute to your community. And so I took the grandchildren. We took the grandchildren up to give Matt Vincent the check that we were donating in honor of the kids. And we had the kids present it to Matt so that they can remember that, you know. My whole thing is you only get out of your community what you put into it. And I don't care where you live, whether it's Butte, whether it's Colorado Springs, whether it's Washington, D.C. All of the places where I lived. You only get out of your community what you put into it. And if you don't put anything into it, then you're bored silly. Too bad. So sad. I don't care.

But, you know, I think that's the thing about Butte. More so before than now. I'd love to see a lot more young people. The blue hairs have really been given for a long time. I'd like to see more young people getting involved and making sure that this community is active and alive. Somebody has got to get going and do something to get another company in here to replace Herberger's. And somebody's gotta do it. They're not going to come looking for us. We have to go looking for someone there. And maybe I'm wrong. I might be totally wrong about that, but I think so. And then looking at the volunteers, the people who get out and campaign. We worked on the campaign just recently. We had some young people walking and we did have one young woman who was unbelievable. I don't remember how many houses she doorknocked. And I can't knock anymore because I can't walk. But we did a lot of phoning. But people can donate that. They can donate an hour or two. It just makes a difference. And when you do that, you feel like you're more a part of the community. And I think that's what happened. You know, with us when I grew up, when we grew up in our neighborhood, we all got together and we did things together.

Grant: Don't you think, you know, back in the day, fraternal organizations, social groups, all those kinds of things were more active? And I'm also curious too, how the strikes affected this kind of unity in Butte.

Brilliant Well, and I don't know. First I want to talk to you about the Elks and the Knights of Columbus and all that stuff. OK, so here's my mom and my dad. And you got these. And my dad worked incredibly hard all day. And then on the weekends, I mean, he was working fixing the yard and doing this and planting this and watering and painting and all that. Yeah. All right. So. And my mom. Like I said, she cleaned the house every day. And these ladies had these clubs. They all had these clubs and they'd get together. And I thought, gee, my mom's not very popular. She doesn't belong to a club, you know? You know, when I moved back here, you know what I discovered? Those clubs. You know what they did? The women's clubs? They got together. And they gossiped and they had a few drinks and they played cards. My mother was home, after she finished cleaning. She'd sit down and read a book. She read probably a book a day. She could read so fast. It was unbelievable.

And she read all of the magazines, the American magazine, McCall's, the journal. She read all those magazines. She read everything. And she read the newspaper beginning to end all the time. So it wasn't that she wasn't popular. She just wasn't interested. But I thought, "Oh, poor mamma." And my dad, of course, wasn't a Catholic, so he didn't belong to the Knights Columbus or anything like that. Most of those were athletic things. One of my friends said to me when his father died. And I won't say his name, but he said, "My father was never home on a

Wednesday night." And I said, "Why?" "Because he was at the Elks." He'd go down there. There was handball. They played handball all the time. And they drank. And that's what they did. My father came home. We sat down to a dinner meal every night. 5:30, sat down. Now the big deal was you have to know this if you're the kid of a miner. They took their bucket. And my mother always packed a good lunch for my dad. And a lot of times he didn't eat the dessert. So the big deal was "Dub's on the bucket." "Dub's on the bucket." And boy, you had to say it first, you know, and then. And a lot of times I realized my father didn't eat the dessert. So, you know, I love it. But he would sit down, we'd eat a family dinner. We'd all sit there in a little tiny kitchen. I don't know how we all fit.

We brought the piano bench out and sat on the piano bench. And I was Johnny Jump Up because I was left handed. I was the only person who could get up and go into the refrigerator and answer the phone or whatever. So I was Johnny Jump Up and I sat right next to my father. And then my little sisters and Mama sat at the other end of the table. And she was cornered in. She couldn't do anything. She could get to the shelf in back of her, but that was about it. So anyway, we'd have this dinner and then after dinner we would play cards or we'd do a crossword puzzle, a jigsaw puzzle, I mean. We had no television for a very long time. My mom and dad, and then two of us, usually my brother Darryl and myself and sometimes Bobby and myself and Mama, Daddy, my sister, Donna wasn't interested in playing cards. She was always doing something else anyway. She's six years older than I am. And then Jerry was a little bit young, although she started playing cards. But we would sit down and play cards together. And a lot of times I can remember turning on the radio and we would listen to the fights. Or we would listen to some of the spooky shows that were on then. Or the great Gildersleeve or one of those things.

Anyway, so then. And then my dad would go lay down in bed and he read. He read every night. In fact we had all of his books for a long time and then my one sister took them and I think they got lost somewhere. And he had paperbacks and he had them all lined up. And he had them all numbered and everything. Oh, he loved his books. He loved his books. So both he and my mother were readers. And so also because of that, then we were readers, you know. In fact, my sister Donna used to take me down to the old library on Saturday and we'd walk down there and we'd get our books. And you never saw her without a book in her hands. That's probably what she was doing when we were playing cards. And we all became readers. And then Phil Brogan is the first man in our neighborhood. Phil Brogan, lived four doors down the street from me. I lived at 938 West Woolman.

And Ed Simonich gave me a bad time one time because . . . I have to tell you the story, because I think it's very funny. When I first moved back here in 2004, I was staying at the Gillespie's house at 1111 Caledonia because my house out on Floro Boulevard, I wasn't gonna close on it for a while. And so Ed came in one day and I said to him, "Where did Janice Roberts live?" He said, "Why would I know where Janice Roberts lived?" I said, "Well, you went to St. John's with her." And he said, "Yes. So do you know where everybody from I.C. is?" "Yeah." We did. We did. Everybody from our class. He said, "Well, you guys were just a pack anyway." And we really were just a pack. But I was starting on something else. But anyway we always found a way to entertain ourselves, whether it was playing race or we used to play hangman. Pudge McCarthy, Sister Mary Jo Ellen. Do you know who she is?

Grant: Yeah. The name rings a bell.

Brilliant All right. She was one of my best friends. And in fact, I'll show you. There's Pudge and I, we were going skiing. Sister Mary Jo Ellen, and this is our sixth grade teacher, incredible teacher, fabulous BVM teachers. And that was Sister Mary Dennis Seada. I can tell you where I sat in the sixth grade. I can sing songs that she taught us. Yeah. She was an amazing, amazing person. Here is Sharon and Pudge and Jadine Robinson. I don't know if you know Jadine Robinson. My mother bought me a camera when I was in fourth grade. These are all neighborhood kids. That's my next door neighbor, that's Johnny Lavelle. And then this is a flier that they put out to all the kids in the city about safety. And this is the policeman. And that's Sandy Whitworth. Her uncle was Bart Riley who was the chief of police. And that's Mary Jo Jones. And they were cousins. And that's me. And that's Jeannie Parker. And they took this picture of us. And then they made this flier.

Grant: About safety, regarding?

Brilliant Not getting in a car with strange people. You know, being careful. All that kind of stuff. I've got one at home, but. And then this is my next door neighbor. These are all kids, just kids that we hung out with all the time. This is a great group here. But anyway, I think people had to find ways to entertain themselves because we didn't have a swimming pool. I mean, if you were rich enough and belonged to the country club. Sure. That was, you know, but or if you had a cousin, who belonged to the country club and they were kind enough to take you once in a while, but we just didn't have that. And a lot of these people like, you know, like Pudge, they went on vacations and stuff like that. They just had two kids. It makes a difference, but we didn't get to do that. Do you know Joanne McCarthy?

Grant: No.

Brilliant That's Joanne McCarthy. She was an incredible athlete. She lives here. She still lives here. This woman was a nun. That's Patsy. Patty Fields and Margaret Meagher. Oh, you talk about an athlete. She died. She died while I was gone. Anyway, a lot of these people. I think people had to find a way to entertain themselves. And now we were lucky because Pudge played the piano beautifully. Marge Evankovich played the piano beautifully. And so Pudge would play the piano. And I loved to sing, but I couldn't play piano. And so we would get together and we'd stand around the piano and play. And we knew all the latest songs. Sharon and I started singing together when we were, I would say, about nine maybe. And she could harmonize. What a gift. Oh, yeah. What a gift. Oh, my God. Just wouldn't believe it. And she could really sing. And then I'll show you. This is when I was in the plays in high school and stuff. We organized a group in high school called the Coquettes. And we sang. I think I counted it, 75 times between junior high and high school.

Grant: And where would you perform? Always at church?

Brilliant We performed all over the place. We performed all over the city. I think this was Marilyn Mason's idea. You know Marilyn. Marilyn sang with us. And she's wonderful. Look, I can only sing. I can't sing harmony. I was the lead singer and then they sang all the other parts.

All these other people were very talented. But anyway, we decided to make a float for the Fourth of July parade between our junior and senior year in high school. And we went out to Marilyn's family. They had a big yard out on Evans and we made this float. Marilyn designed it. So we did it all.

Grant: That's a hell of a float.

Brilliant It was. And you know something? We won money for it. We won one of the prizes. And Sister Mary Seraphin sent me a letter to us in care of me, because she knew my address. But anyways, you know, you had to find ways to entertain yourself. And so we did. We sang. We sang all over the place. And it was fun.

Grant: Can you think of venues offhand that you performed in that are now gone?

Brilliant The I.C. hall. We performed at the K of C. Of course, the KC is still here. The building is here, but we performed for them. The Elks, the Moose, the organization of Moose. I didn't even know what they did, but we went to perform for them one time. And it was awful because I couldn't stop laughing. I don't even know why we were there. And we used to perform, you know, where the old county hospital is now, the NCAT. Right down at the end of my street, we performed out there a few times. My uncle belonged to the UCT. And we went out and did Christmas. We performed at the Paul Clark home for the orphans. We went there and sang. There was a big military celebration every year for the Army, the Air Force and the Marines. And they had a big dinner at the Finlen. I think it was in the Treasure State Room. And we sang there and they had a stage for us to sing on. And we sang all the military songs.

We sang out at St. John's one night. I love this story. All right. We sang at St. John's one night and Monsignor Riley was the pastor there. Sister Alicia was our music teacher in high school. Very talented woman. I drove her crazy and she drove me crazy. But I was her best singer. She had to deal with me and I had to deal with her. So anyway, we were going to sing out there. And I used to sing "The Red Balloon." [Sings] "The red balloon is a fiery ball . . ." So she would tell us we had to sing. And that was just when the six of us, the Coquettes were singing. Mrs. Mack named us the Coquettes. Marilyn Mack's mother. John Mack. You know John Mack? His sister was a Coquette. Okay. Well, there she is right there. And her mother thought our name should be the Coquettes. And Marilyn said, "Oh, that's just so embarrassing." But it was fun. So we did it.

And so. We're singing and the trio was Sheila, Sharon and Maryland, and they had harmony like you wouldn't believe. They were good. And Marilyn and Pam sounded wonderful together. So I said, "How about if the six of us get together?" And we formed this group and then Janis was our accompanist, Janice Roberts. And being a good accompanist is really a special talent. You just can't just play the piano. You have to be able to move with your singers and sense what they're going to do. You have to listen. But anyway, I said, I am not going to sing that song that she gave me to sing. But I'd been to see South Pacific which had played the previous summer and I was in Kansas and I had heard it and I loved it. "I'm in love with a wonderful guy." So I decided I'm going to sing that. So that's what I rehearsed and that's what I sang. And this Father O'Reilly was a real scream. And he's sitting out there and he winked at me. So I winked back at him. And the people loved it. So we got in the car afterwards and we said, "You know, we could do a

whole show of South Pacific songs." And they said, "Okay, let's do it. Let's do it." So anyway, we decided to do it and we wanted to do a show for the girls at Central High School, but nobody knew about it.

As a surprise. So I went to Sister Mary Seraphine who I had become very good friends with because I spent so much time in her office. I wasn't in trouble. I want to emphasize I was not causing trouble. I just wanted them to know what my opinion was. Oh, she really didn't want to know what it was. And so that's why I spent a fair amount of time there. But in fact, Johnny Lavelle, my next door neighbor, said to me one time, "Why don't you just set up a cot in her office and sleep over night." But, you know, I always told my mother and my father, I'd say, Well, this is what happened . . . And most of the time they said, oh, that makes sense. That's not right. I never really got into trouble with them. I never got, you know, cut off or anything like that. So anyway, we decided to do this and she said, but you must have a sponsor. So we went to one of the nuns that we really liked. One of the young nuns. Sister Bernadette Murray, who really was quite remarkable.

And she said, Ok, fine. And then Sister Paul Joseph was also in the same class as Sister Bernadette Murray. And she was a photographer. So she took a lot of these pictures. Like all those pictures, Sister Paul Joseph took them and developed them. She taught me how to develop pictures. It was really fun. But anyway, it just surprised the entire student body. And then while we got changed, we had like a break in the middle to change into the nice dresses. Pudge played the thing from the apartment. I mean, you just can't do those things in big cities. You don't get to do those kinds of things. I've lived in a big city. You know, it's harder to get your foot in the door. But that probably is one of the highlights. And when I was doing this, I met the Rabbi at one lunch. We were singing one day and he came up to me afterwards and he said, "I would like you to sing on my television show." I didn't know he had a television show. And I said, "Well, I'm not sure I can. I'd have to check with Sister Mary Seraphine first."

Because after all, that was Jewish and I was Catholic. What did I know? I didn't know anything. And so I went. She said, "Sure you can." So he and I ended up becoming very good friends. In fact, we were very good friends until 1967. And then he made a pass at me. And that ended that. But anyway, here, see the plays that we were in. And so many people got to be part of it. There was kind of a difference. Sports today kind of seem to be the end all and be all for young kids. And my husband taught high school and junior high school in Colorado Springs. And so he dealt with a lot of kids like that.

And of course, I worked at a high school there. I was a counseling secretary. And it was sort of sad to me. Although the school I worked at was much more like Central was where if you were a fullback, it didn't make any difference. You could still be in the school play. Joe Sudhi, who was really quite a ball player, was the lead in [inaudible]. I mean he was a very talented singer. You don't have to do just one thing. And I think that is another key. You don't just do one thing. If you dance, you can also play basketball. And so it widens your horizon, if you will.

So we really did have wonderful, wonderful experiences. And we always found something to do that was fun. That's when I graduated from high school in Central. I did not graduate at the top of my class. Trust me. And that's the group that I went to the convent with for a while.

Grant: So where was the convent then?

Brilliant St. Mary's College, Leavenworth, Kansas. That's the day I entered. And that's the day I left. You weren't supposed to get pictures taken, but somebody took that picture. Thank God they did. I think all of those things. Everything happens for a reason. Mm hmm. Do you think so?

Grant: What reason?

Brilliant Well, that's it. Sometimes it takes time to figure out why you are where you were when you're there. But I went to St Mary's College. I spent three years in the convent. I always wanted to get out of Butte. I told you that. I really wanted to see the world. So I went to Leavenworth, Kansas. Somehow, that doesn't seem very smart. Does it? But I really wanted to be a nun. I really thought that that's what I should do.

Grant: Is that because you had such influential teachers?

Brilliant Well, I think part of it was that. I think part of it was that I had wonderful nuns in grade school. BVM's. Pudge and Sharon both became BVM's. We had ten people in our class who entered the convent that year. And I think as many boys entered the brothers and the priesthood. There were a lot of reasons why I entered the convent. One was of course, I'd gone to daily mass and communion, and the people that I most admired were nuns. I mean, other than my parents. Sister Mary Seraphine, incredible person.

And she listened to me. If I'd go in to say, I don't agree with this. She'd say, "Well, sit down, Kitty, let's talk about this." And then she'd say, "Oh, Ok, you got a good point there." And then she ended up coming to the convent when I was there. It was great. I loved it. But other people, Sister Paul Joseph from Central. Chemistry teacher. Sister Bernadette Marie. I wouldn't have made it through high school without her because that was when my father's job changed and all that. Those were trying times. So I had a lot of influence that way. I also really wanted an education. And there was no money by that time for me to go to college. None. And I didn't want to stay in Butte and get a job. So I went to the convent and I stayed three years. I became professed. And I thought, Hmm. Nope, this is not for me.

And it took me a full year of sleepless nights. I used to sit in the bathroom on the floor because it was the only place there was a light on. And I read two or three of Dickens' books and I read Carl Sandburg's Lincoln. I didn't sleep much, but I finally realized that this was not for me. And I thought I would never get married. I wasn't date bait. I didn't have lots of boyfriends. I had lots of friends who were boys, but not boyfriends. I was everybody's friend. And I always say to people, they'd dance with me and that, but they didn't want to take me home because they wanted somebody to kiss good night. And I'm like kissing your sister, you know.

So, but I had a lot of friends who were boys and I just thought. So if I get home and I feel like, you know, if I get home, I'll just be an old maid. That's OK. I don't have any problem with that. I know who I am. I know what I'm about. I know that I'm doing the right thing. So I did. I moved to Denver because my parents had moved to Denver. And Sister Mary Seraphine was very wise

because when she left, or when I left, she wrote my mother a letter, which I do have somewhere. She thought it would not be a good idea for me to come back to Butte because she said the girls who have come back, who have left the convent and gone back to Butte. It's very difficult for them because there's an attitude, you see. There was an attitude. I don't think there is anymore. I know there isn't because not very many people do this kind of thing. But when I was going to the convent, I would not say three people encouraged me.

I have always been very out there and I don't even know why the nuns encouraged me to tell you the truth. And I didn't even tell my parents. I came home from school one day and there was an envelope. My mother said to me, "You're planning on doing this?" And I said, "Yeah, I am." And she said, "Will you tell your father?" So I'm sitting at dinner and I told him and he said, "I don't think it's a good idea. I don't think you should go." And I said, "Now I'm 17 years old. You did what you wanted to do. Mama did what she wanted to do. Daryl, Bobby and Donna all did what they wanted to do. Now I'm going to do what I want to do." And he said to me, "OK. Just so you know that if it isn't the right thing. This is always your home."

Grant: Wow. That's a great reaction.

Brilliant It was. What a lovely man. To give me my opportunity to try and be myself. And then when I did, they came to Kansas in July of 1964. And they came to live in Topeka where I was. I was the chauffeur for the summer. Long story. I really do have interesting stories, but my dad and mom came and we made pasties for all the nuns who were living in this, at this orphanage that summer.

And they left and went home. And a week later I called and I said, "Oh, by the way, I'll be coming home." I didn't even discuss it with them. And I'm the kind of person that once I do it, once I make the decision, I've made the decision and I don't look back and I don't regret it. I have no regrets. But you see, I went to the convent and I went to the convent for good reasons. But I spent three years really learning about myself, really realizing who I am. And so when I left, I got a job at the Asthmatic Research Institute in Denver. I was a house-parent for 24 teenagers. I was 21 years old. I was in charge of these kids.

Here's the letter that they wrote that they were revolting because I was leaving and moving to D.C.. I came in contact with kids that I would never have come in contact with here. I mean, about half of my girls were black girls. Many of them had never met white people before. They were from Detroit. They were from the hood. Yeah. And so I learned a lot about that. And so I learned a lot about myself and I learned a lot about other people. So there is a reason for everything that happens.

Grant: Was it some overarching skepticism of the church that finally convinced you?

Brilliant No, it had nothing to do with that. Had to do with just . . . Nope. I still went to church with Mass, did all that and I still do. I've gone through what I call times in the desert where it was like . . . Where I got disgusted. And there are times, there are things that I am not happy about. There are parts of the actions that the church has taken that are wrong, as far as I'm concerned. Were handled very poorly. And they were all handled because they wanted to keep it

going and they wanted to hide the pedophilia thing. They've handled that so poorly. And they've lost. They've lost so many people. My husband is one of them. He studied to be a priest. I met him when he was in the seminary. I met him because . . . I want to tell you this last story. I must be over the time limit.

Grant: No, there is no time limit. In fact, I have a couple more questions for you, too. Please go ahead.

Brilliant Well, in 1967, I was living in DC. I had moved to Washington D.C. in 1965. Because I came home and I worked at the Asthmatic Research Institute for a year.

Grant: So you went from Kansas to Denver to D.C.

Brilliant I went to Kansas, to Denver, to D.C.. My parents had moved to Denver in 1961, right before I entered the convent. They left and I stayed here. And then I went to the convent. And so anyway, my roommate was a girl from Butte that I'd gone to high school with. We really didn't have much in common because she was really smart and she was a really good student and she was incredibly beautiful. I think she is, personally. She still is. She's not quite as young as she used to be, like the rest of us. But she's still my best, my very, very dearest friend. And so we were living together.

We ended up living together in Washington, D.C. And one day she had some friends from Gonzaga. She'd gone to Gonzaga. She had some friends from Gonzaga. They'd gone to Mass. And they came back to our apartment for breakfast. Now, being with a bunch of people from Gonzaga. And not being from Gonzaga is like being with a bunch people from Butte, and not being from Butte. I have great sympathy for people who come here and are surrounded by Butte and they don't know the stories. And having been gone for 43 years, I've experienced some of that. But the other thing that I've experienced is I've experienced a bigger world, you know. And so I'm very different.

Well anyway, so they're all there. And I thought, "I've got to get out of here." And so I got in my little VW and my sister, Donna, the one who lives at the Beehive, had gone to St Mary's College, too. So she had Charities of Leavenworth. She was one of the first white people to be accepted to Howard University in D.C., and she was getting a master's degree in psychiatric social work and she'd gone. There was somebody giving a speech at Catholic U one day, and she just wanted to hear this person talk. So she went over to hear this person talk. And she was sitting next to some woman who was a nun. And so she's not shy either. She says, "Hey are there any Charities of Leavenworth there?" And this woman said, "Yeah." Three names. So I'm talking to Donna later and she said, "Well, there are three charities of Leavenworth, but I don't know any of them." And I said, "Well, sister Janelle is Jackie Kruger, you do know her because you went to college with her."

And I said, "Marie Columbia taught in Butte. But you wouldn't know her. She's one of the ones that went to Peru. And the other one was Edna Hunthausen." Isn't that crazy? I can remember Edna Hunthausen and I can't remember what her nun name is now. But anyway, they were Catholic. Well, this Sister Marie Columbia is one of the ones who went to Peru. The first group

from Butte that went to Peru. And when I was still in the convent, we were doing a big program for them, a sendoff. And Sister Mary Seraphine said, "I want you to organize and direct a music program." So I did. And I did it. And that's that. So I thought I really liked her. She had spunk. I knew she had a lot. So I get in the car and I drive down there. I knock on the door and she lets me in. And so she walks into the room. And she looked at me like, "Yeah, so who are you?" And I said, "Well, we know people in common."

And then you did the name game. And she said, "I know who you are." She said, "You're the one who directed the music program the night before we left." And I said, "Yeah, I am actually." And she said, "Kitty, you've got to come to the guitar mass." And I said, "A what?" And she said, "A guitar. Have you not been to a guitar mass?" I said, "No. It sounds terrible." Because I was used to the organ. I.C.'s organ is . . . I was used to singing up in the choir loft and all this. She said, "No, you've got to hear this." I said, "OK."

Actually at that time I was kind of in the desert. I hadn't been going to church. And so I said, "Well, give me a call sometime when they're doing it." They had a guitar mass at Theological College, which is the seminary. I didn't know what it was. It's the seminary. They didn't have it every day. They just went whenever, I guess they could get in there whenever they allowed them to do it. These young seminarians. So anyway, I said, you can give me a call. And I have to back up and tell you a little history.

When I was leaving the Asthmatic Research Institute to move to D.C., there was a young guy there. There were four students from Phillips University in Oklahoma who used to come and do a summer program with the kids there. The asthmatic children. And one of them was from Medicine Lodge. I want to say Medicine Lodge, Kansas, down in the southwestern corner. I think it is in Kansas. I was going to do a drive-away car. They don't have these anymore. But what it was, they had people, if they wanted their car driven from one town to another. Someone could drive it. And all I had to do was pay for the gas and take care of the car. And then you'd get it. So this couple from Denver wanted somebody to meet them in New York, I think it was, or DC with their car. So it was my opportunity to move. So I did. And so John said to me, "Well, I'll drive as far as Kansas with you." So he said, "I have a very good friend who lives in Kansas." They went to dental school together. So he was telling me that this guy's brother had studied for the priesthood and he had taken a break.

And then eventually then John wrote to me and said, "Oh, you know, this guy's back in the seminary again." Okay, fine. That's nice. I didn't know him. So anyway, I mean, just like, why do things happen? So I meet the family. I go to Kansas. I meet Dennis who is John's friend, and I met his mother and I didn't meet anybody else. That's it. Then I get in the car and I drive and go on to D.C.. Right. So this nun has said to me, you've got to hear this guitar mass. OK, give me a call. So this is on Sunday, I guess. She called me Tuesday. She said, "There's a guitar mass tonight. Come on, pick me up. Let's go." So I said, "Alright." So I went. Oh, God, I loved it. It was great. So then they were going to do another one on Saturday and go Saturday. And so I said, yeah, I'll come Saturday. OK, fine. So I was standing there. I'm standing there with Sister Janelle Kruger and she and I are talking. She did remember Donna.

And so we were chatting and this seminarian came up and he's standing there talking. And he

said, "So where are you from?" And I said, "I'm really from Butte, Montana." And he goes, like, big deal. And he didn't care. And so anyway, he said to the nun, "Where are you from?" And she said, "Well, I'm from Emporia, Kansas." And he said, "I'm from Kansas, too." And where? Well, he was from Wilson, Kansas. I said, "Oh, I've been to Wilson, Kansas. You must be Norburg." And he looked at me and said, "Who are you?"

Grant: 'How do you know that?'

Brilliant And I said, "Well, blah, blah . . ." And I met this guy and his name was Dennis. And he said, "Dennis Ferry?" And I said, "No." And he said, "Dennis [inaudible]." And I said, Yeah. And he said, "That's my brother." And I said, "You must be Norbert." And that was on Saturday. And on Sunday he said to me after mass because they had a guitar mass again on Sunday. And for somebody who had been in the desert, I went to mass two days in a row. And so then he said, "I want you to meet this other older guy." Because he was an older guy to be at the seminary. And he said, "I want you to meet this older guy." He takes me over.

And he says, "This is David Brilliant." Oh, that's an interesting name. And he said, Do you know, there's a priest here from Butte?" I said, "You're kidding me." He said, "No. Ed Frazier." He said he just walked through those doors. So I said, "I got to find him because we obviously know people." And off I go through these doors and I keep looking and I finally find him. And we played the name game and came to find out. My cousin Jerry Harrington, who lived right up the street. They'd been best friends when they were little. And he said to me, "Kitty, do you know how to make pasties?" And I said, "As a matter of fact, I do." He said, "You know, I would kill for a pasty."

So I made pasties in this kitchen. It was about a fourth the size of this room. And made pasties. I made 36 pasties and I invited Mary Jane, her fiancé and my sister, her husband and her daughter and myself and the three nuns and I invited the seminarians whose names I could remember. Yeah. And I remembered David's name. And we all had pasties in a park. And then we went down to my sister's house and we were visiting. And so it was. "Hi, how are you? The weather's nice."

And later. Oh, that was in April. And in May, we were talking after mass one day and I said to him, "When do you leave to go back to Florida?" He was from Florida and he said next Tuesday. And I said, "Are you coming back?" And he looked at me really funny. And he said, "Why do you ask?" And I said, "I just have an instinct." And he said, "I haven't told anyone but my confessor." But he said, "I have a job interview tomorrow for a teaching job at Bishop McNamara High School."

And by that time I'd gotten a transfer through Geico, because I was working at Geico. Back to Denver because Mary Jane was getting married. And they don't do transfers back then. They didn't do transfers like that. And so anyway, I didn't get it at that point, but I'd put in for a transfer. And so anyway, I said to him, "Well, If you get back to town, give me a call. I will cook you dinner." He's been cooking ever since I should say. That was in the beginning of June. And I was going to visit Rabbi Kurt, which is another whole side story. But I was going to visit Rabbi Kurt, who was then at the University of Georgia in Athens. And so I hadn't taken a vacation. So I

decided. Well, and Frank Hughes, you know, Frank Hughes from Butte? Study up on Frank Hughes. He was like a big hoo ha at the Houston Space Center. He was one of the consultants on The First Man, the movie that just was made. And he went all through grade school, high school with us. I mean, you know, part of the pack. Yeah. But anyway, I was going to go down and I tried to call Frank and I didn't get a hold of him. I got a hold of David and I said, "I'm going to come to Orlando on Thursday night."

And it was July. And he said, "Well, I'll pick you up." He said, "If you can't get a hold of Frank, I'll pick you up." And he said, "Because my mom lives in Orlando." And he said, "And then you can spend the night there." And he said, "I had a place at a motel." And he said, "I'll pick you up in the morning. I'll bring you over to the space center so that you can go through Cape Canaveral and all that kind of stuff." I said, "Well, that would be nice." It was just a little vacation for me. So I went and I saw Rabbi Kurt. And I got there on Thursday night and he picked me up and he took me over to the house to meet his mother and his sister and his nieces and stuff. Now, what was interesting to me. I thought it was interesting anyway, because I got there and I visited with his mother, who was a little pinched, sort of, because her son had left the seminary. But so it goes. Yeah.

So she immediately shows me the 8x10 glossies of his girlfriends from high school who were the queen of this and that and the queen of whatever else. "Oh, they're cute girls, aren't they?" Great. If I had his album with me, I'd show you. And so anyway, the next day he picked me up and he lent me his car and I went through the Cape and did all these things. And we were going to go swimming. We were going to go to the beach that night. So we went to the beach. We went to Smyrna Beach, I think it was. And we were walking around Orlando because that's where he was going to stay at his mom's and I was staying at my hotel and we were walking around and we went and had supper. And we were eating supper. Kind of like the Uptown. A little bit bigger. But white tablecloths and stuff like that, but not fancy-fancy. And I'm not exaggerating. I got up. I walked into the ladies room. I looked at myself in the mirror and I thought, "My God, I'm going to marry this man."

Grant: Really?

Brilliant Period. I mean, all we'd done was talk. We just talked and walked, and that was it. And by the end of the weekend, we didn't say we loved each other, but we knew and we got married. That was the end of July. He came back to D.C. at the end of August, asked me to marry him. Two days later. And he said to me, "Don't tell me until you know." Which was pretty gutsy. What if he'd said, "No, really, I don't." And we were going to get married the following summer and then we thought, well, maybe we'll get married at spring break. And we ended up getting married December 28th. Feast of the Holy Innocents. It was a Thursday. Is that great? I love it. And it was 51 years ago.

Grant: 51 years.

Brilliant 51 years ago. See, everything happens for a reason. I entered the convent because I needed to Sister Marie [inaudible]. There were little things, steps all along the way that I see. Oh. Oh. I mean, we should never have met each other. We should never have met each other. He was

born in Saginaw, Michigan. He grew up in Orlando, Florida, and had been in Twila, Utah. But other than that.

Grant: Yeah. Never out West.

Brilliant See. No, I really believe it. So that's the way I live my life. Everything happens for a reason and you only get out of your community what you put into it. But I mean, I really have had . . . I think Butte was a terrific place to grow up. It was. You found friends that never leave you. Never. My friend Sharon that I sang with and that we played. She lived two blocks up Woolman. She just died. 69 years of friendship. She said to me, I was over sitting with her. She had terrible breast cancer. Awful. And six years ago we thought she was gonna die. Seven years ago now. And one of the girls from the Coquettes said, "Oh, let's get together and just sing one more time." And I said, "I'll ask Sharon."

This is at the picnic by the way. The pasty picnic. [Inaudible] And that's at the beach and all that kind of stuff. This is at Cypress Gardens. Isn't it interesting? And this is a \$100 wedding. Right there. \$16 rings. I inherited this from my Aunt Kit. Most important piece of jewelry I have. Right there. It is sixteen dollars. And this is the homily that Father Frazier gave 51 years ago at our wedding. Bless his heart. And that's David's mother. There's Mary Jane and Lynn. But anyway, I started to tell you something else. That's my mom. The bowler. I started to tell you something else.

Grant: 69 years of friendship.

Brilliant Oh, I was talking to Sharon. She was dying of cancer six years ago. Oh, I started to tell you. Six years ago. Seven years ago. Six years ago, we thought she was going to die of cancer. And I went to the doctor with her. It just didn't sound good. She'd had it before and it came back. And he said, "I might be able to give you something that might give you a little more time." And so this one gal, Pam, wanted to get together and sing again. So I said to Sharon and she said, "It's just too much trouble." I said, "No, you don't have to do anything." I said, "I'll organize it. We'll do it at my house. If you feel like coming, fine. And if you don't feel like coming, that's OK. That's all right." People want to get together.

And because Sheila was coming who has also since died of breast cancer. But Sheila was coming so that meant Bev wanted to come, which meant so I mean, by the time it was through, there were 23 people coming. And five stayed at my house and people stayed all over. And we had three or four days of getting together for breakfast. Anybody who's stopped over, we had breakfast. You know, just really loose. Let it go. And then we said the rosary on Thursday. Everybody came. Theresa Delasary, I don't know if you know. Virginia went all through school with us. And Theresa was in the convent with me a year behind me. So anyway, she came too. I mean, it was a very broad group of people. It wasn't just that group, the Coquettes singing. Anyway, we all got together. And Sharon came.

Anyway, she really, really enjoyed it. It was a wonderful experience for all of us. And then what happened was one of my friends was sitting across the room from me. I was sitting by Sharon. Sharon was sitting on the sofa next to somebody else. There's Mick Delaney, you know. That's

Micky, in eighth grade. But she was sitting across the room from me and she said, "I know this sounds crazy, but there was a glow around Sharon as we were praying." She lived for six more years. And lived. Incredible quilter. Oh. Wouldn't believe the quilts she made. She made all sorts of things. And then this year was the last year. That was the end of it. But anyway, we were sitting there talking. I couldn't stay with her. I'm not a person who could sit and be at someone's beck and call nonstop. I've got too much energy for that. And she understood. She knows me well. I mean, we knew each other very well. And so another gal came and I said, I'll give her a break every once in a while and I'll sit. And then, you know, so I'm over there and I'm sitting there. She said, "Do you want anything?" I thought she meant like a glass of water or something. I said, "No, I'm fine." And she said, "No. I mean, do you want anything forever and ever? Do you want to take something away?" I said, "No. I have a couple of things you gave me six years ago, and I've got sixty nine years of memories. I don't need anything else." And you know, that's the kind of friendship.

Those are the kinds of really wonderful, deep friendships that we formed in this town that everybody thought was just a big, dirty town. And it's not a big, dirty town. It's an incredible place to grow up. And what amazes me is when I get on Facebook and all these people say, oh, my God, I just loved it so much, and I did. And I want to say, maybe you want to think about moving back. You know, there are some things that are a little touchy now. We need a department store of some sort or another. But, you know, there are so many things that are so wonderful about it. You know, I just think that you personally get to know people. You get to know people well. I was so touched by Mark Doran's funeral last week. Fran is a good friend of mine, and my daughter went to the one in Seattle because she lives on Vashon Island. But the one last week was.

All of these people came and his old friends took up the whole front pew. That's the beauty. And, you know, I have to tell you about him. I was in Seattle a number of years ago with Becky, my daughter, lives there. And we were across town from where she lives. She was getting her nails done or something. And we were having a sandwich. And there's this young guy standing there at the counter. And I said, "Are you Mark Doran?" He looked at me and said, "Who are you?" "And I said, "Well, you don't know me and I don't know you, but I'm a good friend of your mother's friend, Dorn." He said, "Oh." I said, "I'm Kitty Brilliant." He said, "Oh, I've heard all about you." And we became friends immediately. See, that's the beauty of it. Why do things happen the way they happen? I don't know. But there's a reason for everything that happens. I look at the things that we did. I could go forever.

When we were in grade school, we would all go. Patty Bomba's mother was wonderful. And she would roll up the rug in the living room. My sister taught me how to jitterbug. So I taught a bunch of people. And Bonny Buckley, she was good. She did a little fine tuning on it. And we would all go over to somebody's house and we would dance. We taught all the boys how to jitterbug. And we'd all dance. Like Gillespie's had a pool table. We'd go there and play skillful pool. We'd go to Sheila Quinn's. Dr. Quinn. They had a regular pool table downstairs and we'd go play pool. There was always something to do. It was really wonderful. And you didn't have to drive to do it. We walked everywhere. I drove a car when I was in high school once a while. I got to drive the family car. Very occasionally. If, like, the Coquettes were singing and I had to get there and pick up Sheila and Sharon. But really not very many of us owned cars.

Grant: Are there recordings of the Coquettes?

Brilliant You know what? I have a record. A friend of Mr. Lavelle who lived next door to me was really the one who taught me how to sing. He was a rope man in the mines. And he had a voice. He had a voice. And he told me that when he was young, there was a man who wanted to send him to Chicago to study voice, but he had to stay home and help take care of his mother because his father died and he had three brothers. He had such talent. But he would say to me, "Kitty, stand over there in the corner." And I would go stand there. And Michael Lavelle, his son, who was really quite a good pianist. And he had to have been incredibly patient to put up with me, to be perfectly honest. He was three years older than we were. His nickname was Louis Lavelle. Here he is. That's Louis Lavelle right there.

Okay. And my brother Bobby. And he would play the piano. And I would sing. And Mr. Lavelle would tell me how I should sing. How to hold your mouth. How if you smile, you lift your soft palate. Makes the voice better. I mean, all sorts of little things like that. And he did so much for me. And he was a rope man in the mines. And that's something of an end. And then the other thing that happened to me when I was in high school was the girl who had the lead in the play Brigadoon. She was a year older than I was. Jerry Simons. Nice girl. Oh, really. And she studied voice with [inaudible]. She lived [on Granite Street]. And so one day Jerry said, "My voice teacher wants to hear you sing." I said, "OK." So I went out and she said to me, it was very nice. She said, "You have the best God given gift that I've ever heard. I will give you voice lessons for whatever your parents can afford to pay. I will give you voice lessons." Oh my God, I was so excited. And I went home and my mother said, "No."

Grant: Why?

Brilliant And I said, "Why?" And my mother said, "Because I said, no." Period. That was the end of it. There was no discussion on that one. No discussion. And, you know, as an adult, one time I said to her, "Why?" Because my Aunt Kit had taken voice lessons until the cows came home and she had a lot of vibrato. And she drove my mother crazy. So she didn't want me to sound like that. So I never took voice lessons.

Grant: I guess you didn't need them.

Brilliant Well, I would have liked . . . My first desire was to have been a Broadway singer, but that wasn't gonna happen. So I went to the convent. I sang there. But, you know, honestly, there's a reason for that. Somebody says, do you ever feel bad? You know, if I had done that, I would never have met David. I mean, really, when you look at it, if I had done that, I would never have met him. So there I am. So we ended up singing. We had a group in Colorado Springs. We sang at church company. And I do have a record of that.

Grant: Is there a digital version?

Brilliant No, there's someone in town who can change these things.

Grant: I'd be happy to digitize it for you if you want.

Brilliant You could take a record and put it on to?

Grant: Yeah, I could email it to you or burn a cd.

Brilliant Anyway, Mr. Leavelle said to me one day, we were talking and he'd heard the Coquettes and he said to me, "I know someone who makes records in his home." This guy. And he said, "I want you to go out there and I want the Coquettes to go out and sing for him." So we did. But one of them decided she didn't want to rehearse anymore. So we kicked her out. And so she was out for about six months. But I do have a recording of me singing in my junior year in high school. And I don't know how good it is.

Grant: If you would like for them to be digitized. I would be happy to help.

Brilliant Actually, I do have records of the company, but they were long play records. And so my sons have asked me if we can get a cd of them. But I said, they're records, I don't know how to get a cd.

Grant: Sure. You bet. We can all do that. Come by the radio station sometime.

Brilliant But, you know, when you think of it . . . did you grow up in Butte?

Grant: No, I grew up in Arkansas and Oklahoma.

Brilliant Where in Arkansas?

Grant: Mountain Home is where I went to high school.

Brilliant I have been to Arkansas.

Grant: Sorry to hear that.

Brilliant We've been all over. David and I, one of our things that we want to do is travel. And I said to him, I remember, it was when we were, I say dating, but we never really dated. He never called me and said, "Do you want to go out on Friday night." What are we going to do Friday night? Because it was a set thing. And I said to him, I'd really like to travel. And he said, "I want to travel, too." And I said, "Where's the first place you want to go?" And he said, "The British Isles." And I thought, Oh, bingo. Yeah. And so our first place there and we've been all over Europe. But it is one of those things, you have to plan. You have to discipline yourself. And then you go and you have a wonderful time. I've got albums of it. If I can't sleep at night, I get up and I take a trip or I look at my album. But I take a trip. I take a trip to Prague. Or I take a trip to St. Petersburg. Or Italy. Have you ever been there?

Grant: No.

Brilliant Have you ever been to Europe?

Grant: I've been to Europe, not to Italy.

Brilliant Where?

Grant: France, Holland, Denmark, Belgium. I hitchhiked about 10,000 miles.

Brilliant If you ever want to go to Spain, let me know. Because we've had tons of foreign exchange students and one of them runs a school outside of Seville. And I would introduce you to her.

Grant: Who has the money now? I don't. So.

Brilliant People say, "Well, it costs so much money." If you save up your money. And you fly and then you do the trains, and you'd stay at a hostel, but we stayed at bed and breakfasts or convent guesthouses. But anyway, I just think that. I really think that . . . And that's why when Sharon is the one who called me on the phone at night in 2003. She called me on the phone and she said, well, she wrote me an e-mail and it said, "Butte or bust." Now, she was living in southern New Mexico on a mountaintop, outside of Silver City. She said, "Butte or bust." And I thought, well, whatever. I don't know what she is talking about. That's all she said. Whatever.

So maybe five days later, she calls me on the phone. We're living in Colorado Springs. We're both retired. I'm running an opera company. And David is still teaching at the community college. Part time, just enough to make a few shekels so we can travel. Sharon says, "Guess what I just did?" I said, "What did you just do?" She said, "I just put money on a house in Butte." I said, "You gotta be kidding me." She said, "No. And you should move back there. You always loved it more than any of us. The price is right. The pace of life is great. You know people." And I get off the phone. And David is sitting there reading his book because he's a voracious reader. And I said, "Hey, you want to move to Butte?" And he said, "Sure, whatever." You know, we always talked.

Well, I had said to him once when we lived in D.C. and we lived in an apartment that was as grey as these chairs are. The whole apartment was grey. We had two little boys. We were very poor. And I said, "Well, maybe one of these days we can retire in Butte. We'll go to Butte." And he said, "Well, we'll just wait and see where the boys are and then we'll kind of, you know, decide." Then I said, "OK." And that was the end of it. And never said it again. And then we moved from D.C. to Colorado, saw a picture of the Colorado mountains on August 7th, 1972, and said, "Well, maybe we'll move back west." So he ended up getting a teaching job in Colorado Springs and we moved there. We lived there for 32 years. OK. Very involved in the community. Again, you just get involved in your community. And so I was still doing all sorts of things there.

So we were supposed to take a trip that fall, that next month in September. We were going to do the rivers of Europe. The only time we take tours is when I can't read the street signs. Like in Russia or stuff like that. But this was a river tour, so obviously we were with a company. And

they called and they had been watching their weather reports. The guy called and said they were going to have to make changes to our trip. Because the rivers had dried up. They couldn't float the boats. I said, You know, you're going to schlep me all over the place on a bus. I can do that myself. So I don't want to do that. I said, I'll put the money away and we'll transfer to something else. So we're sitting there and I said, "So what do you want to do in September?" We travel in September. So I don't know what I want to do.

And I said, "Well, we could go to Butte and get a lay of the land." I mean, he'd been here several times when my Aunt Marie and Uncle Dan were alive and then a couple of class reunions and that. So he said, OK. So we came up and it was the first day Sharon was there to move her stuff into her house. And we helped her move her stuff in. And we looked around at several houses and I saw three that I thought might be possibilities. But we thought, oh, we're not gonna do anything until next spring anyway.

So we got back home and we went on to Lake of the Ozarks. And took a trip and went back to St. Mary's and visited my nun friends who were still in. And we just had a good time. Our son David called us on the phone and he had said that he and Holly (his wife), they wanted to buy our house. And I said, "For God's sake, you don't even have your house on the market." And it's September. You're not going to sell a house now, you know. It was late September. He called us and we were in Topeka. He said, the first person through our house is buying it. And they wanted it on the first of December. I said, "You've got to be kidding me." He said, "No." And so then I had a friend who had a house in Colorado Springs. And she said, "You can just live in my house until you . . ." So I called and I said, "Can we get a contract on this house on Floral Boulevard?" So we did. And I didn't want to move until February. And so one thing led to another. It was like a domino thing.

Grant: When you first returned to Butte after 40 odd years, you know. It sounds like you'd returned on occasion for this and that, was there something that struck you that had changed substantially?

Brilliant We had been here several times before, but the summer before in 2001 or so, we had gone to Seattle to help our daughter paint some stuff in her house. And I said to David, instead of going back down to Colorado through Utah and that, let's go through Butte and get a little Butte fix. So we got to town and we went and we used to stay at Kay Burke's house. I don't know if you know Kay Burke.

Well, we came through and that summer, and David said to me, "It looks like things are picking up in Butte." I came to my twentieth class reunion in 1981. And then I came to my 25th reunion, and the 30th, But the 40th, I didn't come, because I was working at Colorado College that summer. I worked with an opera company and we did a big vocal arts symposium thing. But anyway, so we had seen some of the down days. But when we came through that summer which was 2002 or 2003. And he said to me, "Gee, it's looking pretty good."

And Colorado Springs had gone from being like 150000, including all the outlying communities to being probably 600,000. And the job that I did working with the opera company, I was on the road a lot. The musical director, she was the one who figured it all out. She's the artistic director.

And then I did all the work. I did all the letters and all that kind of stuff. And so I was running around a lot. I spent a lot of time driving, going here and going there. And there were other reasons we really wanted to move to a smaller town or just getting tired of all the traffic. And so we looked around a little bit in New Mexico, where our son was in the Air Force.

He was getting his PhD and was working at the Air Force Base in Albuquerque, doing his science. And there were places outside of Albuquerque that seemed good. But it was so brown and plus, they had snakes and stuff like that. We looked in northern Colorado, but it's just gradually Denver is just Colorado. So anyway, we talked about moving to a smaller place. And then what I did do was I called my cousin Danny. Harrington Surgical. I called Shar Simonich. I called Dixie Harrington. I talked to several other people. Mary Kay Burke. Shar and Ed Simonich had moved back here from Rio De Janeiro. He was a big deal with Shell Oil. I talked to Shar and I said, "Do you have anything to do?" And she said, "God, Kitty, I'm going all the time. I never stop going." And I said, "Well, I guess if you can adjust from Rio de Janeiro, I can adjust from Colorado." So we decided to come up and take a look. And we looked at houses and I saw the three houses and I saw that one.

Then when I moved up, David stayed in Colorado Springs because he was still teaching at the college. So I came up by myself. And I will say that first. I hadn't lived by myself for a very long time. And I was a little nervous about it because there was one light across the street. This house and the rest of it was dark and I thought, by God if I have an emergency. You know, and there are some very funny stories about that, too. I mean, at one time, I thought somebody was in the house. And the policemen, the police were so lovely to me. But anyway, I got here. And, of course, you have to get out and about. So I would walk around town and I'd go in and visit the stores and I'd look at everything and I'd talk to people and that sort of thing. And then because I run the opera company, I went to the symphony office and I talked to Susan Welch. I went to one of the symphonies, I guess, but I looked at their program and I thought, gee, they should have more donors. There weren't any doctors or lawyers or Indian chiefs or anything. Those are all people who give to this stuff. That's one of the things I did for the opera company.

And so I would be glad to just go through and make a list of people that I think might be possibilities, or at least contact them, ask them if they want to donate to keep it going. Unfortunately, she never used it. I spent a lot of time on it and she didn't use it. But then again, there's a reason for everything that happened. So it wasn't time wasted. And then she died. Well, first of all, first thing I did the next year was going to be our 45th class reunion, 2006. So in 2014, I said to Mary Kay Burke, who had done the last one. I said, "Would you mind if I organized that?" She said, "I'd love it if you did it." Because they're a lot of work if you do it, you know, but I don't do things the way everybody else does them. So I did things like I spent a year and a half organizing the reunion. I tracked down everybody's phone number, every classmate's phone number and I researched until I found them and there were only two people, I didn't find it. And one is in a nursing home. And the other woman was only with us about eight months at Central to begin with. But I never did find her. Could never find her.

She lived with her sister and her husband. And so I don't know what happened. But anyway, I spent a year and half organizing this class reunion. And had the most wonderful time, oh, God, it was so much fun. In fact, you'll see there's a book done. There's a box downstairs that'll say,

Kitty Brilliant stuff. And I took pictures. It was before this building was redone. And I sat and went through every newspaper from 1957 to 1961 and turned the pages. Look to see if there was a picture of any one of my classmates there. And I made a note of it. And at the time, I had to go down to the library and it was microfiche. I made a copy of every one of those pictures. And then we did it at the Finlen. And I made all these poster boards and I put a big thing that said, "We were in the news." I had a great time doing it and people enjoyed that. And then I did the middle class reunion and I did every grade school, all the pictures from grade schools.

And we had done the 100th anniversary reunion of Catholic Education in Butte. And I worked on pictures and that for that, which is a very funny story also. I worked with Joyce McGuinn. She's not well right now. I just met the most wonderful people that I didn't know before. Kathy Peoples. Somebody called me on the phone. And they said, "Would you be willing to do the radio spot for the 100th anniversary reunion?" Well, they called me because I had done that. Susan Welch had gotten killed in a tragic bike accident. And some of the board members came to me and said, "Would you be willing to run the symphony? Would you be willing to do that?" And I said, "No, I'm retired. I don't want to do that." And then I am talking to my daughter, Becky who lives in Seattle. She said, "Mother, you always said you only get out of your community what you put into it. You owe it to your community. You could do this with your hands tied behind your back and you owe them a year."

Wow. Don't tell your kids anything. You don't want it to come back early. So I said, "OK, I'll do it for you." So I did. And while I was doing it, then also I did the 45th class reunion and I got to know a lot of people in a lot of things. And I did the ads for the TV. It was really fun. I had people do ads. They don't even put ads on the TV anymore, you know, for them. But I did them all and organized. I raised a lot of money that year. Yeah, really a lot of money. I went door to door and asked people if they wanted to buy an ad. I walked all along Harrison Avenue, that mall. It works, but it takes meeting the people. You can't just call them on the phone. You're just a voice on a phone. But if you go talk to them and visit them. And so because I'd done all of that, walked in and out of stores and got to know people, then it makes a difference. Yeah, it does.

And I'm so sad about Herberger's closing, the sad part is that it was a very successful store. The main store wasn't successful. The main organization wasn't. So we lost our store. It was fine. I'm delighted they're doing a call center there. And what all of us old blue haired ladies want, we really want to get Kohl's here. Well, we want a department store. You know, I get stuff off of Amazon. I get it, sure, and I don't mind. But I don't want Wal-Mart being the only store in town. Yeah, but it's much better than it was. I mean, you know, really, when we came through a couple of times, honestly, everything was boarded up. Look at all the stuff that's going on on the Eastside. I mean, there was no such thing as Sparky's. There was no such thing as the beauty thing there. The dentist. There's a lawyer there now. There are, you know, craftsmen. He wasn't there. I don't know where it was, but he wasn't there. And, you know, 15 years ago, I've been back. No, I've been back now for 15 years next month. Right. So he wasn't there 25 years ago. There's some good things going on here.

Grant: On a kind of a larger scale, people talk about Butte's decline starting maybe in the 30s, you know, when the city peaked at 90 to 100,000. Do you think the overall decline is over?

Brilliant I'd like to hope the decline is over. There are two things. First of all, we cannot be dependent on one industry. And we were so dependent on the Anaconda Company. And when it pulled out and when it filled up the pit with water and that, it really did a lot of people in. And it discouraged them. I would like to think the decline is over. We need young vibrant people. I'm a blue hair. I can sit and talk about things. And we do. We do still get involved, but we can't get involved the way we used to. I mean, what I'm 75. When I was 70 years old, in all truthfulness, I made most people look like they were moving in slow motion. You can ask Ellen. But then, my body started just giving out on me, and my body is not great. You know, I do what I can do, but I don't move nearly as quickly as I used to.

But we need some younger people and we've got some people. We have to have some people with charisma who can sell this place. I mean, you go to Sheridan, Wyoming. We have a university here. We have a symphony. I don't know what kind of condition all those things are in these days, but we've got those things and we've got beautiful buildings. Now, my niece. My oldest brother's daughter, now she's a California girl. That's where she grew up. My brothers couldn't wait to get to California. Now all they do is complain about, well, my one brother's dead, but their kids - all the Mexicans and the blacks. And I want to go, Give me a break, you idiots. Just stop it already. I have no patience for it. No patience for Trump people. You can take that out if you want to. Well, I mean, I really don't. I have no patience for that. That's ignorance. You know, you need to read. You need to study. You need to pay attention to what's going on in this world because it is going to affect, you know. Period. It is.

But anyway, they were here and my nephew Cody came from Denver and he and Jennifer took a couple of days while they were here and they just drove around and kept driving around, looking at the houses and looking at the architecture. And Cody loves that kind of stuff. He's an insurance person, but he's got a gift for architecture, something like that. I always thought he'd be an architect, but he didn't want to do that anyway. They just go on and on. And they were here last week. It isn't like we had great weather or anything. They went out to Discovery and loved that because it was so reasonable. Cody said, "My God, what we paid for all of us to ski and snowboard, it would have cost us one ticket." You know, because we used to ski down in Colorado, too. But this is good skiing. There's so many things about Montana that are beautiful and Butte. I mean, look, you've got the lakes here and there.

We don't have a river, but you know what, we don't have to have a river to be a moving town. And they just went on and on and on. Cody was up here for the Fourth of July last year. And so we go up to Granny Franny's and watch the fireworks. Now, I mean, to tell you, this is the hit of the year. And they went to the waterpark and they go out and two of the kids can swim like fish. So they like to go out to the one out there, to Fairmont. Cody and his partner came. And he said to me, oh, my God. And his partner is from Mississippi, I think it's Mississippi. And he said to me, "I've never experienced anything like this." And I said, "Well, Butte is the place to be for the Fourth of July." I said, "This is small town America at its very best." It really is small town. And if you haven't read, Michelle Obama's "Becoming." There's an entire chapter that she talks about, Butte from when they came to Butte. Yeah. Oh, my God. Yes. And that was very exciting. And I was as far away from him as I am from you.

But I did not reach out, shake his hand. I took pictures because I was up close and personal. So.

But it's got so many things. We just need to have young people who are willing to extend themselves and look for businesses. I look at these young brewery people. I think they're doing a great thing. I don't drink. So I wouldn't mind if it was something other than alcohol. And the other thing I love is, I was talking to Jerome McCarthy. And I said I'm just so pleased with the kind of sentences he's doing. Instead of sticking somebody in jail, they make them work. Do you know that we went to Norway and you know, that's what they do in Norway. That's what they do in Norway. People don't get off, they don't sit around all day watching television and walk around a little bit in the yard and then get fed. They're out working. They're digging in the pits. I think that's a good idea and I wouldn't want to be committing any crimes.

Grant: Yeah, there's a lot to learn from Scandinavian democracy.

Brilliant I think Scandinavia is wonderful. But then I just really like all those places that we've been to that we've been fortunate enough to experience. You know, we were in Russia, in St. Petersburg before Putin came around again. And it was a wonderful experience. But I think Butte has got a lot of possibilities. We just have to have people out looking for people to come to town. Now, I did talk to somebody the other day, and I don't know if it's accurate or not. There's some possibility of a United Airlines flight. Have you heard that?

Grant: No, I haven't.

Brilliant Well, I'd heard it a couple of times. I was working on the symphony. The Symphony Guild has a tour of homes at Christmas. I used to do that and my house was on it and I sat on a house this year, which was the penthouse above the Hennessey. Is Hennessey's closing? It just makes me want to weep. But Anselmo opened again. That was where we used to go. It was just a block away. But peddler's is where I really went to get pick candy. Very important, pick candy. You didn't have it, didn't you?

Grant: No.

Brilliant Okay, pick candy. Mrs. Peddler used to have a big glass cabinet? I mean, we were so short. We were so little. We just looked in and she had little dishes and they were full of candy. When I did the class reunion, I did a survey and I sent it out to everybody. In fact, Mick Delaney wrote to me and he said, Did you? That was when he was still in Colorado. He said to me, "Did you get my survey? If you didn't, send me another one, I'll do it again." I mean, people loved doing it. Because I asked all these questions about in grade school, like, do you remember your grade school song? You remember what were your colors?

You know, who's your first-grade teacher? Well, this kind of stuff. And one of them was, was there a grocery store close enough that you could walk there by yourself, that you didn't have to be holding your mom's hand? And then if you had a nickel to spend on pick, did you call it Pick Candy or Penny Candy? Okay, well, then some actually called it penny candy. Now, we never did. But I think that was some of the kids from the flats. And so we would go up and pick candy because you picked it. What did you get? So I loved it. Now I can tell you what I always got. First penny, four green leaves. And I got milk balls, malted milk balls. They were two for a penny. And the third thing was a piece of red licorice. I didn't like black licorice. The fourth

thing was kind of the free spot. I might change this to there. And I kept those orange sort of peanut things, whatever they are. I might get a little red, chewy kind of things. And then the very last thing was double bubble, bubble gum. And you chewed and chewed and chewed and then the very last thing you did was stick it on the cookie jar.

But what was really fun was to hear what other people got, like some of the bottles, plastic. Did you ever see? They are not plastic. They were wax. Little like bottles that had some juice in it. It was just sickly sweet. Awful. But it was so much fun. You know, what I love is the Anselmo market is open again. And Mary Kay has been up there twice and said it was really good.

Grant: Okay, I'm glad to hear that.

Brilliant There's got to be some energy. Young energy. Your age energy. Don't you think?

Grant: Certainly. Yeah.

Brilliant How do you get it? You're not going to get it from the Silver Bow, the mayor, whatever he is right now. I mean, he's there and he's in his office and he kind of keeps things going and stuff. So much better energy. You have to have energy. Karen Burns has got good energy. And you've got to have people who are committed. Committed. And I was so pleased that North-Western built that new building. Isn't that exciting?

Grant: 21 million dollars.

Brilliant Amen. That's right. That's right. And the parking building. We needed parking and they built it. I don't come uptown, unfortunately, very often anymore because I don't do much up here. Yeah, but David's over volunteering at the Irish store. Volunteers one day a week, every week. Now, you know, we have to find some way to keep things alive and keep things positive and keep things going. And I think the waterpark. Oh, thank you, Jesus. I mean, seriously, I think it's great. J.P. said they made over what they had anticipated making. Anyway, I could talk till the cows come home?

Grant: No. I appreciate your time today. There's plenty of other folks to follow up with to that you've mentioned.

Brilliant Ed Simonich.

Grant: I think he has a county phone right now.

Brilliant No, no. Ed Simonich is a retired executive with Shell. He's married to Martha Ueland. He volunteers. I mean, he's on a lot of boards.

Grant: You know, I believe we may have his number on this list that we're working on.

Brilliant Alright. I think Kay and John Burke. He graduated from Tech. He's from Grand. She graduated from IC and Central with me. I think she went to Tech and Carrol. On Platinum. And

she's had a very interesting family history. I don't know that it might not be Butte history, but one of her relatives came over the mountains and was a minister, priest or something. And she really does have some interesting stories. OK. Pat Crossly lives out in the flat. And [inaudible] she grew up on the side of the hill there. That would be a different sort of thing, wouldn't it? I'm trying to think of people who do different kinds of things. Of course, Fran Dorn would be wonderful. And she's never left. And she raised her kids here. Right now is a tough time for her, of course. She might be a good person. You have to have somebody who is willing to talk.

Grant: Now, this has been really enjoyable. I'll give you my phone number at the very least. Give me a call about digitizing those records. Yeah.

Brilliant I'd probably give you three kisses. Are you married or anything?

Grant: No, I'm not married.

Brilliant Okay. I'm terrible about the phone because I didn't really want a cell phone.

[general conversation]

[END OF RECORDING]