

Oral History Center
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

Dorothy Walker

Interviews conducted by
Shanna Farrell
in 2014 and 2015

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It is recommended that this oral history be cited as follows:

Dorothy Walker “Dorothy Walker: An Oral History” conducted by Shanna Farrell in 2014 and 2015, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 2014.



Dorothy Walker

Dorothy Walker was born in 1930 in Stockton, California and raised in Angels Camp, California, where her family moved when she was five years old. She went to grade school in Angels Camp and was an active singer and pianist in several musical groups. She attended UC Berkeley from 1948 until 1950, when she left after getting married. She moved to Chicago in 1953 and returned to Berkeley in 1960 and subsequently completed her Bachelor's degree. From there, she worked for the city of Berkeley and UC Berkeley until she retired in 1992. In her work for the City of Berkeley Ms. Walker helped desegregate Berkeley public schools, limited high-speed car traffic in residential neighborhoods, and was involved in three downtown plans. As a UC Berkeley employee she radically transformed parking on campus, helped acquire the Clark Kerr Campus, and with her appointment as Assistant Vice Chancellor of Property Development in 1989 she was the first woman administrator "chancellor" on campus. She has been active in her retirement, serving on many local committees.

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Interview #1 October 7, 2014
[Audio File 1]

01-00:00:08

Farrell: Okay, today is Tuesday, October 7, 2014 and this is Shanna Farrell interviewing Dorothy Walker. This is tape one, session one. Dorothy, let's start out by having you tell us a little bit about when you were born and your early life.

01-00:00:28

Walker: I was born in Stockton, California in 1930. My parents were married in 1927, when the country was prosperous. My mother was a high school teacher. My father was a farmer. He had a peach ranch outside of Stockton. They bought a nice little house in Stockton. My older brother was born in 1928 and I came along two years later. I was conceived before the Depression, but born after it began. The Depression was probably a very important part of my early life. My father lost his farm and my mother had to go back to work, so it was a struggle in those early years.

My father went to work in a gas station and he was very fortunate that someone loaned him a very substantial sum of money in 1935, and he was able to move to Calaveras County, to Angels Camp, and set up a gasoline distributing business. It included running a service station and selling a new product called stove oil that was being used for heating houses, replacing the wood stove.

I had five years in Stockton, where I started kindergarten, but when we moved to Calaveras County, there were no kindergartens, so I had to wait to start the first grade. The first year we lived in Calaveras County, we lived in a little town outside Angels Camp, Vallecito, where we were able to find a cheap little house. My brother went to a little all grades in one room school. He started school. I wanted to go to school. He went to school and I went with him every day, even though I was not enrolled. I would sit in the school because I simply wanted to be in school. That began the gap between my brother and me in education; he and I had been mid-year entries, both having April birthdays, and he was accelerated when we moved to Vallecito and because there was no Kindergarten I had to wait. So he was two years older but three years ahead of me in school. We moved to Angels Camp after about a year of living in that little town.

01-00:03:23

Farrell: Can you tell me a little bit about each of your parents? Maybe say their names and then some of your earliest memories of them.

01-00:03:31

Walker: My mother was Grace Ross, and my father, Elsworth Alford. An interesting story about the Alford family. The family name was pronounced "ALLford, but after we moved to Angels Camp, everybody in town started calling us

ALford, and we accepted that pronunciation, so now all the other parts of the family are the “ALLfords”, but we are the “ALfords”. [That shows how one adapts to one’s environment. In Scotland, the name “Alford” is pronounced “Afford”.]

My mother was born of parents who were in the Salvation Army. At that time it was a quite radical religious organization. Her mother, who was born in Canada, was a colonel in the Salvation Army in Canada. My mother’s father was a Scot and, according to some family stories, had gotten into trouble in college for being too radical in terms of his religious and political views. He was associated with the International Workers of the World Socialist movement. He left Scotland and moved to Canada where one of his brothers had already settled. There, he met my grandmother. They married and had three children, Jack, Grace, and Ross.

My mother, Grace, was the middle child, born in 1898. The family lived in many different places while my mother was growing up. While they were in the army, they were moving around because they were assigned to different places, but then they simply moved around because my grandfather was very restless and was evidently never very happy in any one place. They lived in Humboldt County in California when my mother was a teenager where she went to high school. Both of her brothers and my mother all came to Cal to go to the university. She moved here from Fortuna and lived with her uncle, who was the British consul in San Francisco. He and his family lived in the Southside of Berkeley, and she lived with him and went to the university here until, later, her family moved to Berkeley.

My father grew up on a farm on the edge of the Central Valley in Amador County near the little town of Ione. I do not know the history of the early Alford family, but his maternal grandparents had come from Illinois to live in eastern Oregon in the 1870s and his grandfather worked as an accountant for a sawmill. His Grandmother, Lucy Chamberlain, married Sherman Alford in Wallowa, Oregon before her mother and 2 grown siblings died of either typhoid or tuberculosis. Lucy and Sherman and her father and his mother then moved to California and bought a farm in Amador County in 1890 or 1891. My dad grew up on this farm and had all the experiences of any rural child, which was to do a lot of farm work as well as to go to school. He used to milk twenty-eight cows before he walked four miles to high school every day. They didn’t have automatic milkers and he was milking by hand. In World War I he was in the Army. He was never sent overseas. After the war, he became a rural mailman, first delivering mail by horse and buggy and then got his first car and delivered mail by car.

My mother had her teaching credential and was a French and Spanish teacher teaching in Stockton High School. My dad had his ranch outside Stockton but was living in Stockton. They met when my mother’s voice teacher had a little party and invited some single men to come to the party. My mother was

singing at this event and my dad was rather attracted to my mother and after the event was over he asked my mother if he could take her home and she said yes. She told me, "I didn't tell him that I had parked my car outside, and I had to go back the next day to get my car." That's how my mother and dad met. They fell in love quite quickly. My mother was in her late twenties and my dad was thirty-three so they were ready to settle down. After a few months, they married. As I mentioned before, they had this nice little house in Stockton.

01-00:08:35
Farrell:

What are some of your earliest memories of both of your parents? Or maybe distinct things that you remember about them from your early childhood.

01-00:08:48
Walker:

Very strong memories in my childhood when my brother and I were really very ill. I was four and he was six. We both had measles and then we got all kinds of complications, and my brother got a mastoid infection and had to have surgery for that. I had something that no one diagnosed at the time but, looking back on it, it must have been rheumatic fever or something like that, because I was in great pain. I could not stand to be touched and I couldn't walk. I can remember how caring my parents were, particularly my father, who would carefully carry me to the bathroom because I wasn't able to walk without too much pain.

My father was always a very tender, caring person. My mother did not know how to be really loving and caring because she hadn't really been loved and cared for by her parents. My grandmother was a ferocious woman, and I only found out after my mother had died when my cousin told me that my mother and her brothers were beaten regularly because my grandmother felt it was her duty to break their spirit. She certainly didn't break my mother's spirit, but my mother did not know how to touch us. I think she did not want to touch us in anger but she didn't really know how to touch us with love. But she cared about us. Whenever we would misbehave my mother would get hysterical. I did not really understand that until I learned about these beatings and realized she was so afraid she would beat us that she did not know how to handle it when we were really out of hand. She would just cry and scream and get very upset. Those are some of the very strong memories I have of my parents.

My dad liked to be a little physical with all the kids, which was the one way we got touched. We'd have wrestling games and he would play with us and get down on the floor. I have memories of my father being a loving, sort of bear-like man who enjoyed his children and enjoyed playing with us. My father's family was loving and supportive. His mother was a really delightful and charming person so that grandmother was the one that I loved to go and stay with. I had a cousin who was my age, and we would often go and spend holiday vacations with her. These early memories are of the very different personalities of my parents and grandparents.

01-00:11:54

Farrell:

You are also one of four children. Can you tell me each of your siblings' names and a little bit about them as children or in your early life?

01-00:12:06

Walker:

My older brother, two years older, Robert Ross Alford, was the oldest and had all the characteristics of the oldest child. He was very smart, always really smart. I always felt very competitive with him, because I was two years younger I always thought I was supposed to catch up. He was very special in my life and always was the sibling I was closest to.

My next sibling was seven and a half years younger, David Alford. He was this sweet little child that I think was the most loved child. The family had come out of the Depression, my dad did really well when he moved to Angels Camp, and they decided to have this third child that was a part of their much enriched life at that point. I remember him as the cutest little thing. He had long, blonde curls, and my mother thought he was so beautiful she couldn't cut his hair so everyone thought he was a little girl. He always had a secret playmate, imaginary playmate. I remember my older brother and I loved to hide around and watch what he was doing with his imaginary playmate. He was a very creative thinker from an early age.

My youngest sibling, Wendy Lou Alford, was born in 1940. She was a surprise. My mother was in her forties. She was not really planning to have another child. My mother and my sister always had a lot of conflict. At one point, my mother told my sister that she hadn't wanted to have her, that she was an accident, which is a pretty heavy thing for a mother to tell a child. There was not a bedroom in our house for her to sleep in and she slept in a crib in my parents' room until she was six years old, when finally I reluctantly, because I was ten years older, agreed that she could come and sleep in my bedroom. I resisted that for a long time.

The family dynamics were of two groupings: my older brother and I, and then my younger sister and brother. My older brother and I were really the children of my parents' poverty and my younger brother and sister were children of my parents' affluence. In many ways, looking at them over the years, my younger brother and sister were almost more like my children in terms of their lifestyles and their expectations than my older brother and I.

01-00:15:21

Farrell:

I know that when you're saying that Bob and yourself were children of their poverty, it's because the Depression era, and your father having lost the farm, and your mother going back to work. But can you tell me a little bit more about that dynamic and how, the poverty versus the affluence, how that maybe influenced both you and Bob, and then David and Wendy?

01-00:15:53

Walker:

All four of us were really challenged by my mother to achieve and accomplish a lot. We were certainly raised with the expectation that we were not going to spend our lives in Angels Camp, that there was a bigger world out there that we were supposed to be part of. I think Bob and I were always conservative about how we've looked at money, how we felt about our belongings. We probably had more difficulty dealing openly with what we wanted and what we felt about things. My younger brother and sister just seemed to have more ability to go for it and be open to things, and much less constrained by "what will people think" or, "Am I saving enough money to do what I want?" It is hard for me to pin down, but that was always my perception whenever the four of us were together that there was this kind of gap in our lives that was more than just the years alone.

01-00:17:10

Farrell:

You had also mentioned your paternal grandmother, Lucy Chamberlain?

01-00:17:15

Walker:

Yes.

01-00:17:16

Farrell:

You said that you had spent holidays with her. Can you tell me a little bit about her and maybe a memorable holiday that you all spent with her?

01-00:17:23

Walker:

She was a woman full of joy and fun and had no constraints about being with children in a really comfortable way. The holidays that I remember were not when the whole family spent them with her. The holiday itself, she would normally come to us in Angels Camp, because she lived in Stockton after my grandfather died. The times that I remember most were times during a Thanksgiving holiday or a Christmas holiday when my cousin and I would go and stay with her, just the two of us. We would play ping pong with her on the dining room table and eat grilled cheese sandwiches and laugh a lot.

She was a Christian Scientist, and we would go to church with her. This was a very stuffy church, but she had a great sense of humor. I can remember once sitting in church with her. She somehow reaches in her pocket and finds a mothball, and she shows me this mothball in her pocket and pantomimes what should she do with it, and she leans down and rolls it down the aisle in front of her. That's the kind of wonderful, spontaneous sense of humor that I did not see in my own mother. That was very joyous. She also was a great baker. Whenever we had birthdays she would always make the most incredible angel food cake. My dad's gasoline business required him to drive his gas truck from Angels Camp to Stockton, because Stockton was a major port where he could pick up loads of gas. He would always go by my grandmother's house and bring home the cake for our birthdays. That was always a very special part of our relationship with her, these fantastic cakes she would bake.

01-00:19:36

Farrell:

I also want to hear a little bit more about your father buying the gas station and your mother working at the same time. Was it typical at that period of time for both parents to be working, having a two-income household?

01-00:19:57

Walker:

I, of course, was a little child, so I do not know what other families were doing. Looking back on it as an adult, during that period people did whatever they had to do to survive. That was basically what it was. Normally, women did not work after they were married. Most schools wouldn't allow women to work after they were married, so I don't know how my mother managed to get her teaching job back, but she was very lucky to do that. Maybe they just didn't have anyone else who was teaching languages. That was while we were still living in Stockton when my dad was employed in the gas station and my mother was teaching school. When we moved to Calaveras County, my mother was not working and my dad was working extremely long hours when we first lived there because he had this big debt to repay and he needed to get his business going. My memory of those years was my dad coming home at eight o'clock at night and we had all finished dinner, and my dad smelling like petroleum products because his clothes were all greasy, especially in the early years when he had to handle stove oil in ten-gallon buckets. That was our life, dad was always working and my mother was a housewife at that time.

01-00:21:42

Farrell:

I'm also curious about the timeline. Did he get the loan to start the gas station before or after you moved to Calaveras County?

01-00:21:56

Walker:

He got the loan from a man that he had gotten acquainted with when he was working in the gas station in Stockton. I guess my dad must have been trying to find something to do. I don't recall or if I ever knew how my dad knew there was this opportunity in Calaveras County. The man who loaned him the money was in Stockton. We made the move to Calaveras County because Dad had been given enough money to start this business there. Dad had given up any hope that he would be a farmer at that time. He had to have another way of making money.

01-00:22:44

Farrell:

When you did move to Angels Camp, that was in about 1936?

01-00:22:50

Walker:

1935.

01-00:22:51

Farrell:

1935, okay. Can you tell me a little bit about the town and what it was like, what you remember, of the place?

01-00:23:02

Walker:

Angels Camp in 1935 was a kind of amazing place. It was still an old Gold Rush town. The downtown is in a valley with fairly steep hills on either side.

The main street is Highway 49 that goes through all the gold country. The main street was about two blocks long. When we first moved there there were a number of saloons on both sides of the street. This was right after Prohibition had ended. In 1935, some of the gold mines were still working, even though it was the Depression and the smaller gold mines that were right in the town of Angels Camp had all petered out or I guess the most accessible gold was gone. But there were very large mines within eight or ten miles of Angels Camp that were deep mines where people were still mining. My sense of the town was that the miners were a significant part of the population of the town.

It was really wonderful to go from Stockton where you're in a little city to this town. After the first little house where we lived out of town, when we moved into Angels Camp we were in a very funky old house. We didn't have much money still. My mother had a wood stove that was for heating, for cooking and for hot water. The house was about halfway up the hill on a street called Hardscrabble, an unpaved street. Most of the houses in Angels Camp had tin roofs and were wood-frame houses. There were a few sort of grand Victorians on a street called Back Street that was next to the main street. But most of the houses were small cottages that were not built with any architectural distinction at all. There were all these funny little roads and paths to get from the hills down to the town. I had friends that lived on different roads, and there were the hills on the other side of town, so if I had friends that lived on the other hill I would go down the hill to the little main street and climb the hill on the other side to visit my friends on that side of town.

The main street had two hotels, a really old Victorian hotel, and a newer hotel that had probably been built in about, thinking about the architecture, probably in about 1920. These were not economically viable at that point. Nobody was traveling. The wonderful old Victorian hotel burned down in a spectacular fire when I was quite young and left a gaping hole in the downtown, which has never been appropriately filled. Part of that site is a little visitor's center in a big parking lot, which is an inappropriate use of that important piece of town. When we first moved there the downtown was completely intact in terms of the structures. The sidewalks were very high on various parts of the street. Some of them, maybe three or four feet above the street, with houses and little shops built at that level. I never quite understood why that happened. Part of it was that there was a hill coming down into this little valley where the downtown was, but it never made sense to me why everything had been built in that way. One side of the street had more normal sidewalks, where the other one was built very high up. I guess that was their way of compensating for the grade in keeping the highway level. That was one of the charming aspects of it and those are still there.

Living in a small town you don't have mail delivery so the post office was the heart of town. Everybody had to go to downtown to pick up their mail. That was a ritual that we always enjoyed. The main street had one or two of

anything you could want. There was a little clothing store for men, a little clothing store for women. A bank. Grocery store, two butchers. A couple restaurants. Two or three bars. The Congregational Church was at the top of the hill. There were a couple of residences that were sort of stuck in, mixed in, with this mix. There was a hardware store, a five-and-ten, a drugstore with a soda fountain, and a movie theater and a tiny little restaurant next to the movie theater. The movie theater and the post office were the heart of town.

01-00:29:18

Farrell:

How do you think the design and the dynamic of the town influenced your notion of community or your sense of community?

01-00:29:28

Walker:

I think they were very formative for me. When my parents were late middle-aged and I had grown up it was proposed to have home mail delivery in Angels Camp and I told my mother that she should fight it because I thought going to the Post Office was a very important part of the social aspect of the downtown. If you've ever been to Carmel, Carmel has no mail delivery, and the post office in Carmel is the social heart of that town. It's remarkable to go and watch all the people going in and out of the post office. That's a wealthy community. It could afford to have whatever it wanted, but it's chosen, I think wisely, to keep that as the heart of the town. I think a tight commercial district that serves everyone in a close-knit way was the joy of that main street of Angels Camp. Now, suburban sprawl has hit Angels Camp. There are bigger shops on the outskirts out along the highway and the downtown is more of an historic artifact now than a really functioning place because the planners in Angels Camp didn't understand the need to keep retail concentrated in the town. Also in rural areas you tend to have a more libertarian view about land use. Most people who get elected to office—there's a well-known libertarian who's been on the board of supervisors there for a long time—think if you have land, you should be able to use it however you want. So it's very hard to have zoning that will confine urban development into a small space and you get the highway sprawl that you see in so much of California that is really discouraging to see. I think it probably did shape my sense that you want to have a center in your community and also the notion of walkability, which is something I've worked on a great deal. That people, even though we had those hills, that everybody could walk to get whatever that they needed. That was huge. We did have groceries delivered before World War II. You could walk to the grocery store or you could call them and they would deliver the groceries to your house. Something that is coming back into fashion now in urban life.

01-00:32:25

Farrell:

Angels Camp had one elementary school, with four teachers and two grades to a room. In the written information that you had given me, you said that there were no amenities, science equipment, or special classes. What are some of the ways in which you think that this served you well or benefited your education?

01-00:32:47

Walker:

I think I had very good teachers. At least most of the teachers were very good. Probably the mixing of grades forced the teachers to teach children somewhat individually, which was probably a plus, so that you couldn't have everybody in lock step, trying to learn all the same content when you had two grades in the class. You were teaching one grade and the other grade and it enabled a little slippage between grades, and that was probably a plus. I think these teachers were really dedicated—that we all needed to learn the basics, that we needed to understand arithmetic, we needed to understand geography, we needed to know how to spell, we needed to know how to write. There were no frills but it was very concentrated. After the third grade we went to school from nine to four o'clock. It was a long day. We had very intense schooling for six hours a day. I think we did well. I was particularly fortunate because the superintendent of schools was also a music teacher so there was a lot of music in the school. A lot of studies indicate that learning music has other intellectual benefits as the brain is trained in good ways by learning music. Everyone was singing in parts by the time we were in the third and fourth grades and reading music. That was considered just part of the natural expectation of what you would be doing in school. I was having my own private music lessons, but I think what happened in school was very important.

01-00:35:07

Farrell:

Let's talk about the role of music. Can you tell me a little bit about some of your earliest instruments or lessons that you had in school or outside of school? Just tell me a little bit more about the role of music in your life.

01-00:35:23

Walker:

My mother wanted to be a singer. She took some voice lessons after she was grown. She had never had the opportunity growing up to learn an instrument or to perform, but she was taking voice lessons when she met my dad, and I understand that her father had a beautiful singing voice. My mother wanted her children to be musically educated. As soon as we had any money an old upright piano was purchased. It was a player piano, so we had a lot of old player piano rolls. All of us started taking piano lessons. My older brother was, quite soon, a very serious pianist. He really took to it like water. I wanted to learn the piano but I was not as serious about it as he was. We both took lessons and then my younger brother and sister also took lessons. When the family was able my mother bought a beautiful 1907 Model A Steinway that is sitting here today. When I was in my teens, my brother and I had a really fine piano to play on. My brother's long fingers made all the scars still on that piano I can see there. Makes me miss him sometimes when I'm playing the piano seeing those scars.

I did also study the violin, but that was kind of an odd thing. One of the music teachers in high school wanted to have an orchestra. There was always just a band in the little rural school. There were only about 130 kids in the high school. There were two high schools in the county. Both of them were union

high schools, so these served a number of different little communities, some up in the mountains and some in the foothills. The teacher wanted an orchestra so he came down to the elementary school and promoted learning the violin because he needed to have some violin players if he was going to have an orchestra. That's how I started the violin, but that was really not a terribly serious operation. He did not have a whole lot of time to devote to us as he was teaching us in his spare time. I learned enough to play very badly. You have to practice a lot to play the violin well. By the time I got to high school his dream of the orchestra had faded and my interest in playing the violin had faded too.

Singing was something I always enjoyed as a child. I just loved to sing. We had a swing in a big tree in our front yard of the house that my parents built in 1939. I used to sit in that swing and sing. It was something that I loved to do for just my own pleasure. Then I played the piano and increasingly got interested in popular music and would play the piano and sing. I bought lots of sheet music. I would ride with my dad in his gas truck to Stockton as a teenager. It took him about one hour to fill up the 3,000-gallon tank in his truck. He would drop me off on a street corner about three blocks from downtown Stockton, and I would race to the music store or to wherever I would go and I would get my purchases. In one hour I had to be back on that street corner because he was not going to stop that truck, and get back in the truck and drive fifty-five miles back to Angels Camp.

Music was huge. We all learned to play the piano. My older brother was very serious about it and thought about a professional career. When he came to Cal he took lessons from one of the best teachers in the Bay Area. He subsequently became a sociology professor but he always had a trio or a quartet or a group that he would play classical music with until the family deafness overtook him and he was not able to hear well enough to play. My father was deaf, and his mother was deaf, and both my brothers were deaf, and I now have two nephews that are deaf. It's a middle-aged nerve loss, genetic of some kind, that's been a serious affliction in our family and very hard on people who are musicians to lose their hearing. So far the one professional musician in the next generation has escaped as I did.

01-00:40:47
Farrell:

Music continued to be an important part of your life, and you gave piano lessons, and you also sang with a number of different groups. Can you tell me a little bit more about that?

01-00:41:00
Walker:

When you live in a really small town, you have wonderful opportunities that you probably wouldn't have if you're in a city, or you would have to work hard at finding them. My older brother was a very serious musician and most people in town were not really interested in listening to serious music and my younger sibs were a lot younger, so I had this little niche to myself. I was the

one person in town who played the piano well, played music that people liked to hear, and I also liked to sing. In high school, I sang in the glee club and sang in different shows we would put on. I was very fortunate that a trained singer moved to town. She was a woman who just didn't belong in Angels Camp. This really sophisticated, urban woman who was a trained singer moved to Angels Camp. I think her husband had bought the hotel. She needed something to do. I don't know how she heard me singing somewhere, but she decided to give me singing lessons. I had this wonderful experience for a year or two of being given very good voice lessons by this woman, who didn't stay there very long, but long enough to give me a significant start. Then I also spent six weeks one summer at a music camp at the College of Pacific in Stockton.

Around town, I was always on call to play the piano. We belonged to the Congregational Church, and my brother had been the church pianist. After he went off to college, I became the church pianist for Sundays. I had to play the classical repertoire. I would play for weddings and the funeral parlor, I was always the piano player for every funeral. If anybody wanted singing as well as piano playing, I did both. Sometimes they wanted somebody to sing at the grave site, and I would have to sing a cappella over the grave. These were all fascinating experiences. I sang in a number of different churches. I remember singing in a wedding in the Greek Orthodox Church, and then the Catholic Church as well as the Congregational Church. Whenever there was some event, fundraising event or something that needed a performance, I would perform in these events.

But the most fun was that I became part of a dance band when I was in high school. There were five or six people in that band. Two or three of them were adults and the rest of us were high school kids. We played in dance halls all over Calaveras County. At least two weekends a month or more there would be a dance somewhere in the county. This was before television and before much else to do so going to dances was a very, very popular thing and a wide range of age groups of people would go to dances. We were usually hired by someone that was putting on the dance and they would charge a fee to get in and would also have a big Italian supper at midnight and charge for that. It was a big social event. We charged them the union rate because there was no other band in Calaveras County. We actually made a lot of money with this. I was making three dollars an hour playing in this band. This was in 1945, '46, '47. It was great fun. I was the only girl in the band. We would play in Sheep Ranch and Railroad Flat and Vallecito and Murphys and Wallace and Mokelumne Hill. These are little towns, tiny little towns, but if they had a dance hall somebody would promote an event there. Once in a while, our band would organize and promote the event ourselves if we didn't have a gig that someone had hired us for, and we'd set one up so we would be able to make some money by running the event ourselves.

We had, for a while a fantastic jazz violinist, an older guy who had played with Harry James Orchestra, but he was a drunk. He was amazing because he could play on all four strings. He would loosen the bow and put the strings over the top of the violin with the bow below and would play jazz on all four strings. Before he got drunk, he was the most amazing addition to our band, but by eleven o'clock at night he would have been sipping from his flask and then he would begin just sawing away. Usually dances began at nine o'clock. For the first couple of hours he was great and then we had to try to get him off the stage because he was messing up the performance. That was quite an experience to see what alcohol did to someone who had a huge talent but completely lost control of it.

Fellows in the band were always good to me. Sometimes, in some of the towns, the only toilet facilities were outhouses that were far away from the dance hall and usually there would be just one unisex outhouse for whatever hundred people or more at this dance. I would have to ask one of the guys to go with me because I felt it wasn't safe to go out to that outhouse at midnight with all the people who had been drinking. So I would take someone with me and make them stand watch when I had to use the outhouse.

We would set up the microphone so I could play the piano and if I decided I wanted to sing I would just pull the microphone over and I would sing. I usually decided when I wanted to sing a song when I thought it was the right time to do it or I was inspired to do it. We had a wonderful supply of the music of the early American Songbook, because someone had given us a lot of band arrangements of music from the '20s and '30s. We had some of the best music of the great composers of popular music. We would play, of course, some of the music of the '40s, a lot of that interesting wartime music, but the core of music we played was this sheet music that we had inherited. I learned to love the American Songbook from all the things that we played in the band.

01-00:49:15

Farrell:

Who were some of the other bands or artists or music groups that you listened to?

01-00:49:22

Walker:

That I listened to?

01-00:49:26

Farrell:

You said that you liked popular music. Can you give me some examples of the popular music at the time?

01-00:49:30

Walker:

Well, of course, Frank Sinatra was the huge hero of mine—that lasted years. That was very, very influential. Records became available at the end of World War II. We were finally able to get records. There were Harry James and Duke Ellington, and a number of singers, Ella Fitzgerald. I am getting a senior

moment here thinking of all the wonderful singers. Bing Crosby, the great crooner. Judy Garland. These were all the popular music. The radio had a hit parade at that time. I guess it was Saturday night. This was a radio show that would play, whatever music that was selling the most in record stores and in sheet music. They would have live performances by people who were recording this music, and you would always wait to see what was the biggest hit—what song had sold the most that week. That was a very, very popular show. We always wanted to listen to hear the most popular song. There was a lot silly music at that time, like “Mairzy Doats” and “Dozy Doats” and “Three Little Fishes” and other funny little songs. But there were also a number of songs that were romantic songs written with longing. The ‘40s, songs that were written during World War II were all about your loved one who is not here and you may not see him again. Those were important parts of the culture, really, the music of that time.

01-00:52:01

Farrell:

I have a couple more follow-up questions, but I think we should probably change the tape, just so we don’t run out of time.

[Audio File 2]

02-00:00:04

Farrell:

Okay, this is Shanna Farrell back with Dorothy Walker on Tuesday, October 7. This is session one, tape number two, and we are in Berkeley, California. When we left off, we were talking about the role of music and your involvement with that. You had mentioned that you spent six weeks at the College of Pacific in Stockton at a summer music camp. Can you tell me how old you were and what brought you there, and a little bit about that experience?

02-00:00:36

Walker:

I must have been fifteen or sixteen. I had just been taking voice lessons from the woman who was living in Angels Camp, and that spurred me on to want to study more at the College of Pacific in Stockton, I think it was the first time they had set up this music camp and invited kids from all of the high schools in all of the counties around Stockton to come. You had to pay to go there. I don’t think you had to audition to get in. I think they took anybody who was willing to pay. It was a great experience, because we lived in the college dorms and we ate in the college dining room. We had all kinds of music classes. A lot of the kids were instrumentalists so the orchestra and the band were significant parts of it. There was a chorus, and then there were individual voice lessons for people who were there to sing. I sang in the chorus but I also had a voice lesson at least twice a week. There was all the camaraderie of all these kids who were interested in music from all over. It was a very rewarding experience.

I remember singing in the chorus in the soprano section and we were singing some rather difficult piece. We had to come in unaccompanied at a high A in

my soprano section in this contemporary piece of music. After two or three rehearsals, the conductor took me aside and he said, "You're the only voice that I'm hearing because you have such a powerful voice when you're coming in this high note, so would you please just not sing that note? Because I want to hear the whole group, and somehow you aren't fitting in." So, okay. When we came to this part and I didn't sing, no one else did either. They were all relying on me to tell them where that note was and to lead the group, and they couldn't do it without me. Well, maybe they could have, but he tried them a couple times without my singing and nobody could find that high A without any other musical landmarks. The conductor came back and said, "You'd better sing that note." I probably did have a problem fitting in with some choral groups because I did have a very powerful voice. I think when I got in college, singing with the Treble Clef at Cal I learned to moderate my voice more to fit into a group. I enjoyed singing by myself and it was hard for me to restrain myself.

The private lessons at the college were interesting with a classical approach to learning the easy repertoire for singing. Because I had a pretty big range at that point my teacher wanted me to sing some of the more coloratura music so he pushed me up into the high end of my range which I was able to do but I never felt really comfortable with it. Also, it wasn't the kind of singing I really like to do. But I learned a lot from him. When I came to Cal and joined the Treble Clef in my freshman year, I sang a solo with the Treble Clef and I guess the university orchestra in Harmon Gym, which was the main auditorium at that time because it was bigger than Wheeler Auditorium, the only other auditorium we had. It was Sigmund Romberg's *Romany Life* which is a coloratura piece with very florid high passages in it. I sang in a student body meeting when I was a freshman. I probably still have a recording of that somewhere around, because that was an exciting event for me to sing before eight or ten thousand people in Harmon Gym. Those music lessons were good. It was like a pre-college experience being there, and that was nice, too.

02-00:06:10

Farrell:

Was music as important in high school, your high school curriculum, as it was in elementary school for you?

02-00:06:19

Walker:

Music was still important. In fact, there were two music teachers in that high school. I can't understand why they had two music teachers. There was a band teacher. I can't remember if she also did the choral work and what the other music teacher did. Maybe I'm mixing things up. A band teacher, really nice woman in her thirties. Full of pep and liked taking the band to football games and other games. Looking back on that woman and her relation to us, I think she was probably a closeted gay woman and really wanted to bond with all these young teenagers. Certainly nothing inappropriate ever took place. I took her up to our family ranch and I can remember sleeping outside at the ranch.

She liked to do things with us and I think we fulfilled a part of her life that she wasn't able to publicly acknowledge. She was great. She got me to learn the flute because she wanted the band to play *The Stars and Stripes Forever* and nobody had a piccolo, but somebody had to play the flute. I learned just barely enough to satisfy her with the pieces that needed a flute in some of the band music.

The choral work in high school was a significant part of school. We performed at many kinds of school events. One of the high points of singing in high school maybe my sophomore year, was performing under Robert Shaw, who was probably the best-known choral conductor in the 1940s and '50s; in fact even longer, for probably twenty or thirty years his Robert Shaw Chorale was the major national choral group. He had grown up in Stockton—this famous person. He decided that he wanted to have a huge choral event. I don't know who sponsored or how it happened, but all of the choruses throughout the whole part of the Central Valley were invited to come to Stockton. Nine hundred kids. We met in the Stockton Auditorium and we had an all-day rehearsal with him. Can you imagine? We had learned the music we were going to sing in our individual high schools but we had never all sung as one enormous group. I don't know how he made it work, because just thinking about how did you even hear the parts of that many people? We had a performance that evening of all the choruses, nine hundred all together, singing under his direction. He was such a famous person and none of us would ever have experienced anything like that before. I have a visual memory of being in that enormous group because it was a very unusual happening and it had nothing to do with one's individual singing skills but simply being part of a huge public event like that was very special.

02-00:10:10

Farrell:

You also continued to work with the dance band when you went to Cal, the first few years that you were at Cal.

02-00:10:16

Walker:

Probably only the first year that I was at Cal. I don't remember if it extended into the second year, but certainly the first year I was at Cal they didn't have any other pianist for the band I had been in so I would go home on a weekend if there was a dance to play with the band. Increasingly, my life was moving away from Angels Camp and there were probably sometimes I couldn't go, and they had a problem, so eventually they got another piano player.

02-00:10:53

Farrell:

This is jumping ahead a little bit in time, but the summer after your sophomore year of college, you went to Houston, Texas. Can you tell me a little bit about that experience?

02-00:11:05

Walker:

My mother's younger brother, Robert Ross, had a major career in the theater, both as an actor and as a director. He put on productions in the Greek Theater

when he was a student at Cal so he got his start here and then went to New York and had many acting roles and directed a number of things. Later, when I was a young married woman, he directed a play with Henry Fonda that played here in San Francisco. I remember going to see it and going backstage to see Henry Fonda. This uncle gave me my first autograph book when I was nine years old and the first two autographs in it were Laurence Olivier and Vivian Leigh. He knew a lot of people. [I looked him up online recently and discovered he had directed Olivier and Leigh in *Romeo and Juliet* in 1940 so I must have been ten when he got those autographs for me.]

It was 1950, '49 or '50, he was hired to direct a major summer theater program in Houston, Texas. A big Houston oil man with lots of money had a daughter who was a choreographer, and she wanted to have the opportunity to choreograph musical theater and asked daddy to buy her a theater, which he did. The theater leased—a 10,000-seat outdoor theater that belonged to one of the universities there, I can't remember now what it was. They were going to do eight shows in this summer series of performances. Each show would run for one week and would play for seven days in that week and then a new show would begin the next week. It was a very intense program. My uncle had invited me to come and sing in the chorus for all of these musicals. Unfortunately, my finals at Cal lasted until they were in the final rehearsals of the chorus for the first show, and so by the time I arrived there it was two days before opening night and I was not able at that point to sing in the chorus. But he'd already invited me and of course I was very excited to be there.

It was fifty-hour train trip from Berkeley to Houston, Texas and I had never been out of the state of California before. Maybe I had driven up to Oregon. I got off the train in Houston and the first thing I saw was a sign that said "Welcome to the West." Well, I've traveled fifty hours going east, and they think it's still the West. Then I saw two drinking fountains, White and Colored. I'd never seen that before either. Of course I knew that kind of racial discrimination existed, but this was very clear. The first thing I saw after I got off the train. That was my introduction to being in the South. It wasn't the West, it was the South.

Before the opening night the rich oil man had an enormous party for everyone, and I couldn't believe what that party was like. They had roasted a whole steer for twenty-four hours in underground pit. The food and the drink—I was dazzled, a little girl from Angels Camp, just seeing the way money was being spent and the way people lived. It was something I knew nothing about. With my Salvation Army grandmother still alive, there was never any alcohol in our house nor did my parents drink elsewhere except my Dad; when he delivered stove oil to the Catholic Church the priest always gave him a snort. Then to hear from my uncle that this guy was just satisfying the whim of his daughter and all of the big-name people from Broadway brought in for these shows. Each week, we had a totally different series of stars who arrived to perform for that week, and then they would do that show, and the next week, we would

have a whole other series of stars arrive. It was a very high-powered experience. I became a rehearsal pianist and just a general errand runner because I wasn't singing in the chorus. I found it interesting at the end of the week that everyone in the entire cast, all the stagehands and everyone else, would gather and the Brinks truck arrived with guards and everyone was paid in cash because almost everybody was from out of town; nobody lived locally. That was an experience just to see that they were bringing in bags of money to pay all of the people that were working there. I had a wonderful cultural experience being there with this totally different way of life than anything I had seen.

By the third show of these eight shows, they were having very serious trouble with the sound technician because he didn't really know the shows very well. This was before we had any of the kind of amplification that we have today. In this big outdoor theater the amplification was huge. There were ten or twelve microphones across the footlights and we didn't have body mics then at all. There were various microphones backstage for sound effects and off stage business. The sound technician had to be activating the mics when a singer was going to be in a certain part of the stage, but also had to have the amplification for the choral work. It was complicated. You really had to know the show. At the beginning of the third show they decided they couldn't have this person anymore. The union did not have any other sound technician. God, I can't even understand why they thought I could possibly do this, but it was suggested that I should try doing it, because I was the one person who did not have an assigned task but was coming to every rehearsal and knew every show. My uncle must have had a lot more faith in me than he had any reason to have, but they said, "We're going to try her to see if she can be the sound technician." They spent several hours teaching me how to operate the board, which was situated in a booth up above the stage, above the stage manager's spot. I had a view into the stage so I could see what the performers were doing. I would climb up into this little eagle's nest with my big board. It was a little intimidating because the owner, the one who was paying for this whole affair, the father of the choreographer, would come to every show and he had a direct phone line to the sound booth. I don't know if that had been installed after the sound was not going well and he was unhappy or what. I'm guessing maybe that's what happened. He had a phone line, and he would call me if things didn't sound right. He would tell me. That was quite intimidating. Somehow, I managed. I think in the second night, one of the tubes in the sound board blew up and I didn't know what to do and I guess the stage manager picked up on it. I turned that mic off, and then I had to bring up the other mics to compensate for one that wasn't working and somehow I managed to run that sound board. For the rest of the run every night I was in the sound booth, and in the daytime I was going to the rehearsals for the next show, learning the show and where everyone would be. It was exhausting and thrilling and wonderful. And of course, Houston, Texas was hot and humid. I'd never been in that kind of climate before. No air conditioning. Once in a while there would be some event at the new Shamrock Hotel, which was on a

sixteen-lane highway outside of town, and they had air conditioning that was so cold that you had to take a coat when you went there. I have fond memories of this as a great event in my life that never happened again.

02-00:20:47

Farrell:

How did that experience shape or inform your sense of American culture?

02-00:20:56

Walker:

It certainly gave me a picture that people could live in very different ways. It was my first experience being in the South. One of the shows we did was *Bloomer Girl*, a show that had a black man in a leading role. Because my uncle was the director, after the show we would take people out to do something. We had to find a black club where we could go because we couldn't go to any of the white clubs with him. I got an up-close view of what the segregation of the South was like, which I had never experienced before, that was very foreign to me. But also very foreign was the lifestyle of people in the theater, both the peripatetic lifestyle—the moving around, traveling here and there for shows—and the money that could be spent. The costumes that would arrive. Because in the daytime I could sometimes be wandering around and see costumes that must have cost thousands of dollars they were unpacking for the stars to wear. The money and this was Broadway brought to Houston, Texas and money was no object and you did whatever you needed to do to make it work. I saw a whole other slice of life.

I also had only known my uncle as this magical person who occasionally dropped in from New York City and got my mother all excited and girlish that her exciting younger brother was there, who usually brought lavish little presents that were like nothing else we had. It was a nice experience for me getting to know him and his wife, who was a famous actress, Margalo Gilmore. She played the original lead in *The Women*, Clare Booth Luce's play, in the 1930s. She was just there with him, being a housewife in Houston, and that was very pleasurable, too, because she was British and I had always seen her as this formidable woman. I got to know her in what little time I had to spend away from the theater. It was culturally enriching for me at many levels, and I learned some about the realities of what the South was like in our country.

02-00:23:54

Farrell:

Moving back in time a bit, you wrote that you used to explore abandoned gold mines, or just the natural landscape, with your older brother and some of his friends. Can you tell me about how that influenced or helped inform your early identity?

02-00:24:17

Walker:

Sometimes, I would explore by myself, too. The first thing that occurs to me in thinking about that exploration was that I've always been really good about exploring things, just going out and experiencing new things, and going off and doing it by myself if I don't have somebody to do it with. As someone

who likes to go hiking and backpacking, the joy of being in nature was something I learned about that continued to be of interest to me. Probably some of that exploring was because a little bit of it was forbidden. Those gold mines, those glory holes, were dangerous places. They were holes in the ground that were filled up with water; maybe they'd had a little barbed wire fence around them but kids had long ago torn that down, because they wanted to go see what was going on. Some of that exploration was because, "oh, this isn't what we're supposed to be doing so we're going to go and do it anyway." Also, I was getting a sense of the history of this place where I'm living. This was rough and ready early California days—the remnants were still there. Why was this town here? Because there was gold here and people came here for that. People were still doing it when I was a little kid. The gold mines closed during World War II and never reopened so it was only when I was a young child. There were a couple of the big, deep mines, but most of the search for gold was with dredgers that were carving up our rivers and leaving all that debris that you see in so many of the riverbeds in California.

It's hard for me to say how that shaped me, but as much as anything it was the independence of living in a small town and no one hovering over you. It's very sad for me to see urban children now who literally do not know how to simply wander because someone is watching over them all the time. People were not watching over me. I could go off and do my own thing for hours. I think that gives you a sense of—well, you're much less fearful, I'm sure, and much less worried that something will go wrong. You assume that it's fine, in contrast to the way parents are raising their kids now, which is to be afraid a lot of the time.

02-00:27:17

Farrell:

Bob was also a very important part, as you mentioned. He's the sibling that you were closest to and felt like he was grouped in as well. Can you tell me about what it was about him that made him so important, or what drew you to him and why you were so close? You had sort of mentioned that, but a little bit more.

02-00:27:43

Walker:

We played together a lot and we did a lot of things together. We probably became closer when the younger siblings were born because they were not us. The two of us were separate from them. We were very competitive. At least I was very competitive with him. I can remember somebody gave us some boxing gloves. I would always challenge him to a boxing match and of course he would always beat me but I would challenge him the next time because maybe I'll win this time. I think he liked to lord it over me sometimes, his superiority, because he was older and smarter. Occasionally, bad things happened. Once he took all my doll collection and took nail polish and painted them all up. It was really, really bad. I remember I had a very hard time forgiving him for doing that because I felt really violated by it. I never gave up even though bad things happened. He was always the person that I needed

to try to be as good as he was. The notion that I was going to catch up was, of course, not an attainable goal—he was always going to be older and smarter. He was the most important family member until he died. Losing him was a huge loss for me.

02-00:29:37

Farrell:

He also went to Cal. When he went to school, you had written that he was starting to expand his political ideas and start to think about things more critically, and that his visits home became stressful for your parents. Can you tell me a little bit more about that and maybe give me an example?

02-00:29:59

Walker:

My parents were Republicans. At that time, most of the people in Angels Camp were Democrats. It was a working-class town. It's now kind of redneck Republican town, pretty much. I always tempered whatever my family was talking about because you reflect the politics of your parents. My dad's instincts were fundamentally more egalitarian than Republican. I think he just couldn't ever understand Franklin Roosevelt, somehow, even though I think a lot of things Roosevelt was doing he approved of. There was this kind of disconnect in my dad which probably enabled Bob and me to be politically more open-minded, because dad was giving us mixed messages. He didn't know it, but I think he was. Well, Bob went to Cal and he lived in Bowles Hall. I do not know how he got involved with some of the people on the Left, but some of them were outside of Cal. Some of the people that I met subsequently through him were adults that were involved in left-wing politics. I don't know if he met them because he got involved in the on-campus things that then became part of a greater political scene, he got involved with Stiles Hall, the university YMCA, which was quite a progressive organization at that time. Not religious as much as it was interested in social and economic justice issues. He became the president of Stiles Hall when he was on campus.

Then one of his roommates was Joe Kamiya, a Japanese American who had been interned during World War II as all Japanese Americans were in a relocation camp in Colorado. That was an experience living with a person of another race who had had deep experiences of what could happen when your country goes off the rails in terms of racism because all of the Japanese in the West Coast were interned. It did not matter that there had been no sabotage, that no one had been found guilty of doing anything, they were moved forcibly from their homes because they were either born in Japan or of Japanese descent. That was a learning experience for him and Joe came home with him occasionally as his roommate. That's how I met Joe, who eventually became my husband, and I know we'll talk about that later.

Joe and some of the people who I think radicalized him were other students. I do not know how much he was influenced by the classes he was taking. He was a sociology major, but later on, when he was a graduate student, he was not really associated with people, faculty, who I would view as having left-

wing views. There were universities that had quite radical sociology departments but I don't think Berkeley was one of those at that time. He would come home and he was talking about all the good things that the New Deal had done. He came to Cal in 1946. No, '45. Roosevelt had just died and we were in a whole transition. Harry Truman was president. What was happening historically was interesting because the whole country was turning from fifteen years of no normality—more than ten years of Depression and then more than five years of total wartime basis for everything economic and everything else. The country was suddenly looking at—what is the new world that we have now? The economy was booming and changing, and labor unions were very powerful and we had a much more egalitarian society right then and it was very open. I think Bob was probably caught up in a vision of what we can become after all the horrors—the worst aspects of capitalism that brought us the Depression and then the war that was so destructive of so much. Now what do we have to look forward to? Of course there were people who had very romantic views about what was happening in the Soviet Union at that time because they didn't really know what Stalin was doing and thought that this was a potential paradise rather than what it really was. I wish I knew more about how he actually got into his left-wing views. I just know when he came home he would talk about labor unions, he would talk about all the good things that the New Deal had done and his vision for the future. My parents were very surprised and didn't know what to make of their son that had been this good boy before he went off to Cal.

02-00:36:59

Farrell:

We'll pick up on some of those things, too, when we get to your time at Cal. But around that time, when you were in high school, you went to Pinecrest for a summer job. Can you tell me a little bit about Pinecrest and what your relationship to that place was, and then what your job was while you were there?

02-00:37:20

Walker:

Pinecrest is a mountain lake at about 6,000 feet. It's on the Sonora Pass about 50 miles or so away from Angels Camp. Angels Camp in the summertime is really hot. The foothill elevation, about 1,500 feet there, is hotter even than the Valley and it has none of the cool of the mountains. We didn't have any mountain property, which my father acquired later. After we moved to Angels Camp, to get away from the heat every summer my dad would fill a truck with tents and canvases and our camp stove and all kinds of equipment and we would set up a camp in the national park campgrounds near this wonderful Pinecrest Lake. It was called Strawberry Lake at that time but it's called Pinecrest Lake now. This was a manmade lake that was a dammed stream. A very beautiful setting with great granite cliffs behind this wonderful lake. It had a big beach all along the one side of it and there were two lodges there that had a few accommodations, but mostly these were stores and restaurants and services for the people who either had cabins with long-term leases on the federal lands around the lake and in the woods or people who were camping in

the campgrounds. From the time I was six or seven, we'd been spending at least six weeks every summer living up there in a tent or in a couple of tents. My mother liked living in the woods. She would take a rug and put it on the floor of her tent. She had a folding chain mattress bed and a real mattress that my dad would bring up. So she was comfortable. It was great fun and we got well acquainted with other families who were doing the same. Over the years we would camp next to the same people year after year because we were kids the same age and we became very close friends. I kept those friendships, some of them, into my adult life.

When I was in high school I wanted a summer job so I applied for a job at one of the lodges. It was called Karl's Place. This was a wonderful old log cabin-style, rambling building. It had a restaurant. Some groceries. It had a soda fountain, a fantastic bakery. It had a gift shop. It had a photo shop, and it had two guys who ran a dark room so that you could get your photos developed while you were there and see your pictures right away. It was the hub of community life. Right behind the lodge was a little amphitheater where they showed movies two or three nights a week, and that was a wonderful place where everybody would gather. Once a week, they would have a talent show. I would sometimes perform in this talent show when I was a little kid.

I got this summer job in this lodge working in the soda fountain. It was a fun job, because I usually worked a split shift and had some time off in the day time. The soda fountain was open from eleven in the morning to eleven o'clock at night often I was working until eleven. Almost the best part of the job if you were working at eleven was that the bakers were baking the bread to sell next day and you could go in and get a hot loaf of bread right out of the oven and eat it. I can almost smell that wonderful bread from that bakery. They made wonderful pastries. It was a perk to work in that lodge. They paid us practically nothing. They had a dormitory space upstairs, one for the girls and one for the boys, and we slept up above the lodge, and we ate our meals there. The kitchen for the restaurant would feed us. When we had our time off we could just go swim and hike in the woods. It was a wonderful experience working there.

I developed a friendship with one of the fellows who was developing the film in the dark room, Henry Lopez. He was from Tracy, a Mexican American guy. He became my first serious boyfriend. That relationship lasted until after I went to Cal. Broke up after I went to Cal. After Pinecrest he used to come to see me in Angels Camp. I didn't drive so my mother, sort of reluctantly, if there was a dance in his high school, would drive and we would stay in a hotel in Stockton and I would go to the dance with him in Tracy. That was a memorable summer. Unfortunately, that lodge burned down a couple of years after I worked there and that destroyed the sense of place that it had created.

It's interesting as we're talking, we're revealing these places that gave me deep experiences. How important gathering places are. That was a gathering

place for so many of the people who came to Pinecrest—Karl’s Place. When we were camping, we would ride our bikes in the morning and pick up the hot Danish pastries and take them back to camp. Everybody would go to Karl’s to get whatever they needed. It was very much the center of the community life for these bunches of people living out in the woods. I’m glad we’re talking about this because it’s making me think how that was important on several different levels for me.

02-00:44:20

Farrell:

We’ll definitely come back to that, too, because that, I think, is a theme that has a lot to do with different facets of your life. I am interested in you were in high school in the late ‘40s, and your first boyfriend was Mexican American. Did you run into any issues because you were in an interracial relationship?

02-00:44:47

Walker:

Of course.

02-00:44:48

Farrell:

Can you tell me a little bit about that or what you experienced?

02-00:44:50

Walker:

My mother was not happy. My high school had several kids that were Mexican American so that was not uncommon. I did not feel strangeness myself. I think it was much more my parents’ strangeness.

02-00:45:31

Farrell:

You said that your mother, she would drive you if he was having dances. Was there any resistance to that?

02-00:45:37

Walker:

It’s interesting. My mother could be so unhappy about what her children were doing, but she was never one to absolutely tell us that we couldn’t do something. She was famous for implying that we could do something, and then the day that it was going to happen, saying, “I never told you you could do that,” which was really hard to deal with. But fundamentally she did not wish to thwart her children. So even if she was really unhappy about it she would try to control it as best she could. Driving me and taking me was part of the control, and being in a hotel waiting for me to come back was part of that control. It wasn’t that she was with me at the dance. I have to admire my mother—her children made her very unhappy with many things but she fundamentally accepted that she couldn’t control us in every way; she would try to exert whatever control she could but her foot never was firmly planted.

02-00:46:59

Farrell:

You did write—and I’m quoting this—“I believe that my mother’s ambitions caused us not only to question the values in lifestyle of the community in which we lived, but to question the status quo, to question everything.” Can you tell me a little bit about that and I guess a little bit more about what you mean by that and why you believe that, and perhaps how that influenced you.

02-00:47:23

Walker:

I keep examining why did my family, my sibs and I, why did we turn out to be the people we are and make the decisions that we did in our lives? I thought a major factor was that our mother was so ambitious for us that we got the message in many ways that we didn't belong in Angels Camp. So we were outsiders. It made us outsiders. When I look at my childhood, I feel now that I was a little bit of a spectator of my childhood. I can't even quite explain what that was, but I think it was because there was this underlying, you don't belong here. My father didn't give us that at all and my mother had had a very hard scrabble and strange life, but she had this incredible ambition. If you feel like you're an outsider all possibilities are open. Really all possibilities are open. Okay, I'm out here by myself. If you live in this free physical environment you've already learned you're not afraid to be exploring, not afraid to try something. Then someone has told you you're not tied to this place. Somebody with deeper psychological insights might be able to explain it but I can only sense that we all, all four of us, feeling a little like outsiders were able to stand outside and then look at what else is outside. Outside the norm were interracial things. Outside the norm were radical politics. Outside the norm were issues of social justice that most people weren't talking about or thinking about. We were open to thinking about all of those things.

02-00:49:53

Farrell:

Unless there's anything else that you want to add about this portion of your life, I think that this is a perfect stopping point and a really great lead-in for the next session. Do you want to add anything else?

02-00:50:04

Walker:

No, this is fine.

02-00:50:05

Farrell:

All right, fantastic.

Interview 2: October 13, 2014

[Audio File 3]

03-00:00:05

Farrell: This is Shanna Farrell with Dorothy Walker on Monday, October 13, 2014. We're in Berkeley and this is interview number two, tape number three. Dorothy, when we left off last time, we left talking about your time at the end of high school and your decision to go to Cal. You started there in 1948, three years after your brother Bob. Can you tell me a little bit about your decision to go to Cal?

03-00:00:36

Walker: I don't think there was ever a decision. It was just assumed that everybody in our family would go to Cal. First, we did not have so many different choices in that era as we have now. The state college system had not developed very much. My mother and her brothers had gone to Cal, and my grandmother lived in Berkeley and we were Berkeley-oriented when we came to a city. It was assumed that we would go to Cal. I don't think I ever even thought about going anywhere else. It was just what you did, and of course, my brother Bob was there and that was a very compelling reason to be there as well.

03-00:01:15

Farrell: When you started, you lived in Stern Hall, and you had a house mother, Mrs. Blumberg. Can you tell me a little bit about her and what your experience was like living in Stern?

03-00:01:26

Walker: I chose Stern because it was the primary dormitory that the university operated at that time, so you either lived in private housing or you joined a sorority, which I was not interested in doing. My brother had been living in Bowles Hall, which was the only men's dormitory at that time. I applied to Stern Hall, which had a relatively small population, but they selected their students based upon geography. They wanted a wide range of representation of people from different parts of California. Well, I was a pretty good candidate coming from nowhere in Angels Camp. I was admitted to live at Stern Hall. It was built in about 1941, endowed by a wealthy San Francisco family, and was a very beautiful place. It now looks a little more like other dormitories, but at that time, it had real zebra skin rugs in the living room, it had leather couches, it had a Diego Rivera mural in the dining room. Furniture was really elegant. It had red carpeting on the stairways. The rooms were very generous in size. There were some single rooms and double rooms. It was a very elegant place to live, and it was on the campus so it was very easy to get around. One felt quite privileged to be in this special place. It was also a very stifling environment. First there were the dean's rules, which were very in loco parentis at that time. Women could not leave their dorms in the evening unless they were going to the library and you had to be home by 10:15. You could sign out for an occasional evening event, but if you were not home by

midnight you were locked out and you were in serious trouble. There was a whole system of punishments and a board you would meet with if you violated the rules, so it was very strict.

The culture was designed, perhaps, to educate those of us who came from varying backgrounds to the niceties of a finer way of life than we had experienced. I think Mrs. Blumberg saw that as part of her role. We were required to gather in the living room before dinner every night. We had to wear dresses. We couldn't have curlers in our hair. We waited until Mrs. Blumberg was ready and then she would lead us down the stairs from the living room, which is on the top floor of the building, to the dining room downstairs. It was rather formal and slightly intimidating. The dining room was a beautiful place with lovely furniture that had been designed to go with the contemporary building. If you had to leave dinner early for some reason you had to go to the head table and excuse yourself to Mrs. Blumberg before you could leave the room. All of the hashers were young, blonde guys. The belief was that Mrs. Blumberg hired only blonde hashers because she thought they looked cleaner than the other guys. Not sure where that story came from but that was what everyone thought was happening. The combination of this conservative social control with the general rules of the university seemed very, very stifling to me.

I had already met Joe Kamiya, who was eventually to become my husband, and he had just moved from International House to live in one of the co-op dorms. I'd forgotten to mention, in addition to the fraternities and sororities, there was a whole system of cooperative housing. Very important housing resource that was started in the 1930s when some university alums discovered students who were basically starving, who didn't have any money during the Depression and didn't have places to live and couldn't afford their rent. They, in the depths of the Depression, were able to buy a building or two at very reduced rates and began a whole system of housing. I don't know what the numbers are now, but it was over a thousand students in various houses when I lived there. I decided at the end of my freshman year that I would move from Stern Hall to one of the co-op dorms. I moved to Stebbins Hall, which was on the north side of campus at Ridge Road. That was a big change for me to move from a very controlled environment to one where most of the women were either self-supporting or more emancipated women. At Stern Hall, almost everyone came from a settled family of some kind. It was their first experience away from home. That was not true at Stebbins. There were older women, there were women who were working their way entirely through school. The cost was very low, because you worked five or seven hours a week depending on what jobs you had, because the students operated the whole system. We didn't hire anybody except three or four cooks in the central kitchen, where I had work shifts on occasion, where food was prepared and then delivered by truck to the different houses.

03-00:07:42

Farrell:

How did you end up working in the kitchen with the food?

03-00:07:46

Walker:

You could sign up for different work shifts and I just thought that would be interesting. You could sign up to prepare the rest of the meal in the house. You could sign up to be on the clean-up crew. You could sign up to be on the switchboard. If you were on the switchboard, you had to work more hours, because everybody liked doing that. I don't really know how I signed up for the central kitchen, but that was an interesting experience because some of the older men who worked in the bakery there thought it was okay to slightly sexually harass the girls. That was something you had to deal with, with the bakers making penises out of dough and chasing you around the table with them. Not that anything happened but they thought it was acceptable to tease us like that. I enjoyed the work shifts because they contributed to the whole organization, and I believed deeply in what that organization was doing. I still belong, and am very happy that they've survived so well.

03-00:08:53

Farrell:

What were some of the differences between going from living with a house mother to not having a house mother?

03-00:09:00

Walker:

First of all, you learned how to work within an organization because the co-ops were managed by the students so we had a whole system of governance for all of the houses together but each house had a system of governance as well. That was a learning experience in and of itself. Instead of someone else imposing all of the rules on you, the rules were made by the students who lived in the house. Clearly, they still had the dean's rules so it was not a completely open system. The dean of students still told co-op women that they had to be in at a certain time but there was much more flexibility, much less rigidity about the way they were enforced. Many more social opportunities to do different things, because of the mix of people that lived there. That was a hugely important experience for me. There was a lot of racial diversity as well as people of different economic levels and people who had many different life experiences that I had never experienced. It was a great experience.

03-00:10:16

Farrell:

So you met a diverse group of people while you were living in Stebbins. Can you tell me a little bit about some of the people that left a lasting impression?

03-00:10:24

Walker:

One of the people who was a very important leader was an African American woman, Brunetta Reid, who then married Burt Wolfman. I think they got married while they were undergraduates. She went on to be a president of college—I can't remember where she was president—and was very involved in higher education for many years. But she was clearly going to be a leader and it was very obvious from her role within the house. Zoe Borkowski was another woman who became the president of the whole co-op at the time I was

living in Stebbins. She lived in our house and she was a very impressive woman who went on to be involved in politics at different levels. There was another African American woman who was a lesbian and she and I became friends. She invited me to go to events—social events—that she would go to in San Francisco. That was another cultural experience, to go to some of the bars and dance clubs in San Francisco that were serving the gay community. Having come from a town where there were probably, to my knowledge, only a couple of gay men, to see that there were many lesbian women and that they had a culture that was supportive of them and enjoyable for them was very interesting to me.

03-00:12:13

Farrell:

What were some of the things you learned from meeting a more diverse group of people?

03-00:12:23

Walker:

First of all, self-reliance. These were women who were not dependent upon their parents for either financial or emotional support, many of these women. These were women who did not have problems challenging the status quo. These were women who were proud of their identity even though it was not part of the mainstream culture. This is 1948. It was remarkable and I feel privileged to have known so many of these women who helped me grow from being a small-town girl to having a much more cosmopolitan outlook.

03-00:13:09

Farrell:

You studied social sciences. Can you tell me a little bit about your decision, and maybe your brother's influence, when you picked this major?

03-00:13:18

Walker:

I didn't really know what I wanted to do when I came to Cal. Of course, I was influenced by my older brother who was studying social science so I decided I would do that. At that time, you did not have to declare a major. You could have a major called the general curriculum. You could mostly choose whatever courses you wanted. I had a focus on social science. I enjoyed the classes that involved a lot of writing—that was very pleasurable to me. I enjoyed philosophy and speech, which involved more writing rather than giving speeches. The end of writing papers in the social science classes that I took was one of my big regrets. I never finished my degree so I did not really have the full experience that I should have had in my years at Cal.

03-00:14:24

Farrell:

Being that Bob was also there, you spent a lot of time with him. Can you tell me a little bit—

03-00:14:30

Walker:

I don't think I spent a whole lot of time with him, but obviously I spent enough time to get to know some of his friends. I had already met Joe, who had been his roommate when they were at Bowles Hall, and I began to see Joe when I was in my freshman year still living in Stern Hall. I invited him to the

prom at Stern Hall and I also invited him to come to dinner at the hall before the prom. One of my friends that I had when I lived at Stern, a friend that I still have, reminded me quite recently that when I first invited Joe to come to dinner at Stern Hall I asked her to sit at the table with me because I felt she was an open-minded person and I wasn't sure who might sit at the table with us. That was the kind of expectations about people's racial attitudes at that time.

03-00:15:41

Farrell:

On that note, can you tell me a little bit more about Joe and his background?

03-00:15:45

Walker:

Joe's parents were immigrants from Japan. They came from an educated family in Japan but had left for economic reasons and had settled in the Central Valley and had become farmers. His father and oldest sister contracted tuberculosis when Joe was about seven. The whole family was sent to a tuberculosis sanatorium, even though Joe didn't have it, because there was no place for him to be. The rest of the family were being treated and his father and sister died—this was before any antibiotics—died of tuberculosis. So his mother raised three sons herself. Joe was the youngest of three sons, having lost the daughter. She had to be a very strong woman running this farm and, with the help of her three sons, raising almonds and grapes in the Central Valley, near Turlock. I don't remember what Joe's oldest brother did, but his middle brother came to Cal and graduated and Joe came to Cal. He would go home in the summers and work on the farm. Sometimes he would go home on the weekends. He was helping his mother keep the farm running, and at the same time he was going to Cal. This followed the fact that his mother and his brothers and Joe were all relocated from the West Coast in 1942, when—really it was an act of pure racism—all of the Japanese living on the West Coast, whether they were citizens or immigrants or whatever their status—it was entirely based upon their race—were required to evacuate from the West Coast. This is one of the blackest marks in the ascension of Earl Warren, who eventually became the chief justice of the Supreme Court, because he basically led the move to relocate the Japanese from California at the time World War II began, and a very black mark on President Roosevelt who agreed to do it. They had no basis for doing this other than a push from some of the major white land owners who took the position that this was their chance to get “the Japs” out of California. So it was a very bad time.

Joe and his family were rounded up, as everyone was. They spent some weeks living in animal quarters of one of the race tracks and then they were relocated to a rural area of Colorado where temporary housing had been thrown up that, in the cold winters of the mountains of Colorado, had absolutely no weather protection. Each family was given one tiny room to live in. It was a concentration camp. We never called it that, but that's what it was. Joe went to high school in that camp. He was very fortunate that there was one high school teacher, a white woman who came to the camp, who was very, very

supportive of all of the kids in that high school and encouraged them that they could have a meaningful life and they would get out of camp and they would succeed. She kept in touch with them during their entire lives. That was a hugely influential thing. He did get out of the camp, then was able to begin college in Colorado and then came back to Berkeley and enrolled here. He'd had a very interesting and unusual life by the time I met him. He was five years older than I.

03-00:20:05

Farrell: How long was he in the camp for?

03-00:20:09

Walker: Probably two and a half years or more.

03-00:20:13

Farrell: When you first met him, was he open to talking about that or discussing that period of his life?

03-00:20:18

Walker: Yes. Yes. Yes.

03-00:20:21

Farrell: Can you tell me about what sort of impact that experience might have had on him, or subsequently your relationship?

03-00:20:33

Walker: The most interesting thing about almost all of the Japanese that were interned was they were not bitter or as angry as they should have been. Many of the young men volunteered for the army and the military to prove that they were loyal citizens. The 442 brigade of Japanese Americans had one of the highest casualty rates of any operating in Italy, probably because they were trying to prove themselves, which is a really sad commentary on our society. Also a very interesting commentary, perhaps, on aspects of the Japanese culture they had inherited. They wanted to be assimilated so much that they couldn't accept that this was happening to them as Americans. They were Americans, and they had to keep proving they were Americans. I don't think Joe had bought into that position completely, but he understood it because so many of his friends had volunteered and had gone into the army. His older brother did. It was quite an amazing time and one that we should never forget.

03-00:22:04

Farrell: When you started dating, this was pre-civil rights. Was there any—what word am I looking for? Did you encounter any difficulty when you were dating because it was an interracial relationship?

03-00:22:26

Walker: If there was difficulty it was probably people staring or looking. I do not recall people ever saying anything or doing anything. That may have been, and I simply have forgotten about it. It evidently was not so important that I'm dwelling on it. I remember Joe telling me about going somewhere and being

refused entrance and they said, “We don’t allow any Ornanentals here.” They didn’t even know what to call him—“You’re an Ornanental.” It was a reality that he was dealing with. When we were first married and went looking for an apartment, we knew that there were racial covenants in most of Berkeley at that time, and anyone who was not white could not live east of what is now Martin Luther King. At that time, that was Grove Street. We rented an apartment just west of then-Grove Street, at Parker. The landlord who rented to us did not seem to have a concern about renting it to us. That was good, because we weren’t sure how we would be received when we went hunting for apartments.

03-00:24:07

Farrell:

So you married Joe in 1950, is that correct? Okay. Which was your junior year. You had mentioned the restrictive covenant and having to move to a specific location. Can you tell me about how this affected your perception of Berkeley and perhaps American culture, where things were at the time?

03-00:24:31

Walker:

I was just learning so much about the world at that time. I had already encountered casual racism growing up and the remarks that people made. My father, who had not had a lot of experience with people of different races and always was a very accepting person, but his vocabulary was “nigger” and “Jap” and so forth. Those were not uncommon words that people used in that era. Somehow, from a quite early age I was offended by that and I don’t know where that came from. I can remember correcting my dad when I was a teenager for language that I thought was unacceptable. I know that my parents were upset when I started dating Joe. My mother said, “We were perfectly accepting of Joe as your brother’s roommate, and we were accepting to have him come home and be in our house as his roommate, but we didn’t expect him to want to marry our daughter.” That was where my parents were at that time.

03-00:25:44

Farrell:

When you had to live in a certain neighborhood in Berkeley, did that change your perception of Berkeley at all?

03-00:25:51

Walker:

I didn’t know the community very well. I was only coming to know it because, as a student, I had lived at Stern Hall and I lived at the co-op, and the co-op was this incredibly diverse and wonderful place. Going from that experience to knowing that I had to live in a certain part of town was—well, it wasn’t a surprise, because I had been educated by the women who lived at Stebbins Hall how much discrimination there was. One of my roommates at Stebbins was a black woman who had grown up in the South and she really knew what it was like to live in a segregated society. I think I was aware intellectually from my acquaintance with these people of what the realities of our culture were, but I was now dealing with it in a small way myself in terms of where I could live.

03-00:26:57

Farrell:

Tell me a little bit about how that affected you or impacted you, maybe even perhaps later on down the line?

03-00:27:06

Walker:

It certainly made me want to try to change all of the things in our society that were not fair. It began my interest in social and economic justice and racial justice, because I am married to a man of another race and therefore I am being treated differently from other people, and he has been put in a concentration camp because he's a man from another race. That's a huge learning experience and you begin to apply that to your view of society as a whole. I was also very influenced by my brother, who had become quite a radical thinker and a Marxist. He was really concerned about our economic inequities. Through him, I had met a number of people who were active in left-wing politics, some of whom I'm guessing looking back were probably members of the Communist Party. Nobody ever said that they were, but in hindsight that was probably the case. I would be invited to go to all kinds of events, political events. I also think, looking back on it, I was probably very much accepted after I had married a man of another race, which gave me some political credibility.

03-00:28:36

Farrell:

Can you tell me a little bit about your early years with Joe and perhaps the birth of your son?

03-00:28:45

Walker:

Joe was a graduate student in psychology at that time, and he was working at the Institute of Personality Assessment. David Krech was one of his advisors. Joe was struggling to write his thesis. He had a lifelong struggle with writing. He was such a perfectionist it was very hard for him to ever finish writing something. (He didn't get tenure later at the University of Chicago because even though he did a lot of major research he was really not able to publish enough of it to get tenure). He was working very hard. We didn't have very much money. He had a graduate student assistantship that paid a small amount of money. Then we were faced with the Loyalty Oath, which came along as part of the whole McCarthy era in the '50s. It was a requirement, to be employed at the university, to sign that oath. Well, we thought that that was a dreadful violation of everybody's civil rights, but after much agony he agreed that he needed to sign it because we needed that job. I also got a part-time job, child care, right after our first son, Tad, was born. A young woman professor in the psychology department had a baby about the same age as mine. She paid me a very small sum of money to babysit that baby. That was more than I needed to deal with at that stage of my life. My first child, Tad, was a very difficult baby, one who cried and could not be comforted, and so he needed a lot of attention. It was quite a stressful time. We had no money, and I had to work at something that put a lot of stress on me and made it hard for me to deal with my own child and Joe was struggling to get his thesis completed, but we managed to do that.

When Tad got a bit older, I got a part-time job, at Kaiser Permanente health organization. I think I got that through a friend of Joe's. It was in the psychology department. I can't remember how many hours I worked. Maybe it was two days a week. I scored psychological tests, the Minnesota Multiphasic Test and other tests. At that time, Kaiser had a research department that was studying their patients in terms of their psychological profiles, and looking at that in relation to health-related issues, so it was an interesting thing that Kaiser was doing at that early stage of the development of the whole health organization. The two leaders of that research project were Mervin Freedman and Timothy Leary. Timothy Leary, who later went on to become a guru of drugs in the '60s, at that time seemed to be a relatively normal person. I enjoyed that work. Another young mother, who was also a graduate student in psychology, would take care of Tad when I went to work, and that worked out well and got me out of the house for some hours to do something fun and remunerative.

03-00:32:38

Farrell:

I want to come back to that, but backing up a little bit to the Loyalty Oath and the era of Communist hysteria. Can you tell me a little bit more or explain what the oath said or what you remember about the oath?

03-00:32:56

Walker:

I wish I could remember this. Could probably go to Google it and we could get the language. Basically, it said I affirm my loyalty to the United States and I am not a member of the Communist Party it's very, very explicit. It required you to stipulate that you were not politically affiliated in a way that, at that point, was anathema. Most of the people who refused to sign it were not members of the Communist Party. They were not signing it out of deep principles, including some of our most beloved faculty at that time. It was a very divisive thing that the Regents promulgated. I believe all the state employees were required to sign it, too, but the Regents, although they're a creature of the constitution, they are constitutionally separate, so I think the Regents had the option of not requiring the oath but they did require the oath of everyone.

03-00:34:02

Farrell:

When those people did not sign it, what were the consequences?

03-00:34:08

Walker:

You lost your job.

03-00:34:11

Farrell:

Can you tell me a little bit more about how that affected the atmosphere on campus?

03-00:34:20

Walker:

I probably wasn't a terribly good observer about the whole atmosphere on campus. Certainly, among the graduate students, it was really difficult because they didn't have the economic options that some of the faculty had who had

the resources to not sign this oath and could go elsewhere. You're in the middle of getting your degree and you've got a graduate assistantship and you need that money. It was a very despairing thing. I cannot remember if there were any of our friends who didn't sign it. I've forgotten. But I certainly know that all of the talk was one of despair that people were being forced to do this. The economic pressure was more than people could withstand.

03-00:35:14

Farrell:

Did it change Joe's relationship with Cal at all or getting his degree?

03-00:35:25

Walker:

I think he was upset that he had to do it, but I think he—he had been through a lot. He had to do a lot of things that were wrong and he did this. You do what you have to do to survive.

03-00:35:43

Farrell:

Were there any other ways in which Communism affected campus, or it was palpable? The ways in which the time affected things here or—

03-00:35:56

Walker:

You know about the whole free speech movement because we've just been celebrating the anniversary of it; before the free speech movement they never allowed any controversial speakers on campus. I do not know when those rules were promulgated, but I would not be surprised if it was during that earlier era because I can remember going to hear Paul Robeson speak standing at the corner of Oxford and Center Street. We were standing on the lawn but he was standing on the public sidewalk because he couldn't speak on the campus. Anyone who was of any—from my point of view—interesting political persuasion, various points of view, could not speak on the campus. You had to get off the campus to hear any of these speakers. That was the culture of the time. As a historian you would be interested in thinking—because I hadn't really thought about it before—were those rules promulgated then or had they always been in place? I do not know. But because of the anti-Communist hysteria, and because Berkeley was, even then, considered a progressive place in the whole panoply of great universities, not that it was necessarily that progressive, there were plenty of people who would come to speak on that issue and wanted to talk to students about it, but they had to speak off the campus. There were frequent speeches that were being held at that time, because I remember going to some of those.

03-00:37:36

Farrell:

What were some of the more memorable speeches that you remember? Some of the more memorable speeches.

03-00:37:43

Walker:

I'm not really remembering anything in particular. I mentioned Paul Robeson, mostly because he was such a powerful person at that time and had been so vilified and was so strong. I simply remember the strength of his conviction

and his willingness to come and talk. As far as what other people had to say, those are all in the dim past, and I don't really remember.

03-00:38:18

Farrell:

You did end up taking a job at Kaiser at the Kaiser psychology clinic. I'm wondering if you could tell me a little bit more about your role there, and then working with Mervin Freedman and Timothy Leary.

03-00:38:32

Walker:

They ran the research clinic and they would tell me what they needed done and most of this was scoring tests. I think every new member of Kaiser was required to take a psychological test because there were hundreds of them. We didn't have machines to score the tests, so I would have to score them manually. I thought it was fascinating because the Minnesota Multiphasic test had a lot of questions that are related to gender identity. It was interesting to look at the questions and wonder why did Kaiser care about this kind of information? Working for Tim and Merv, who were perfectly nice people to work for, and I have no memories that I can say that would distinguish them except my later knowledge that Tim became such a flamboyant person. I had no sense of that at that time.

03-00:39:59

Farrell:

Did that surprise you when that information came out later in the media?

03-00:40:04

Walker:

Probably there was a little something about him. Of course, it's always a surprise when someone you know suddenly becomes famous, particularly for sort of a quirky reason as he did.

03-00:40:21

Farrell:

At that time, too, you had Tad, who's your first son, correct? Then around that time, were you pregnant with your second?

03-00:40:31

Walker:

Yes. My second, Gary, is two years younger than Tad. When I was working at Kaiser I was pregnant with Gary.

03-00:40:41

Farrell:

Being a working woman at that time who's also pregnant, can you tell me a little bit about that, or was it not remarkable?

03-00:40:51

Walker:

There was no problem with that. I don't know if that was because I was working in a health care organization and if there would have been a problem somewhere else. There was not a problem.

03-00:41:07

Farrell:

Were you, at this point, yet involved with any community issues?

03-00:41:14

Walker:

No, I had my hands full managing my family at that point.

03-00:41:20

Farrell:

You ended up moving to Chicago in 1953. Can you tell me a little bit about when you learned that Joe had been offered the—he was offered an assistant—

03-00:41:32

Walker:

Assistant professorship.

03-00:41:33

Farrell:

At the University of Chicago. Can you tell me about when you learned that he was offered this job and maybe some of the things that went into your decision to move to Chicago?

03-00:41:43

Walker:

We were terribly excited that he was offered a job at a prestigious university. It was going to be a major move. I had never lived outside of California before. The semester began in September and Gary was born at the end of July so I was going to be moving with a six-week-old baby and a two-year-old. Joe went on ahead to find us a place to live. I do not know if he had failed to contact the university about university housing. I have no memory of what happened, except I do remember that the day I was to fly, they canceled the flight. I was staying with my brother and his wife who had one little baby. There were three babies there in this house waiting for my flight. I couldn't get another flight for three days. There just were not that many flights. So I was stuck there waiting and finally got on the plane. When I arrived in Chicago Joe had not found us a place to live. So I arrived with two babies and no place to live. We stayed in a grungy little hotel for about a week and he finally found a place across the midway south of the university in an entirely African American neighborhood. This was not university housing. We had the second floor of a three flat building there. Joe bought a car but I had never learned to drive. Winter comes. It's snowy. I've got the new experience of having to bundle your children up into snowsuits and snow boots. You'd know about this, but it's quite an experience if you've never had to live with it before. I had to learn to drive in the snow of Chicago and then had to learn how to dig out the car because we parked it on the street. I could walk to the campus from there and I could walk to some of the parks.

After about six or eight months of living on that side of campus, we found an apartment in Kenwood to the north of Hyde Park on the other side of the University of Chicago. That was an amazing apartment in a wonderful mansion that had been cut up into apartments. We had the master bedroom as our living room. It was an oval, wood-paneled room about twenty-five feet long. Quite magnificent, but you had to go through the bathroom to get to the bedroom and the kitchen was in a former closet. It was all a little strange but it was nice and had a backyard. There were some other neighbors in an

apartment, in another old mansion who became very close friends of ours who had kids, and that was very nice. That's now become probably one of the most elegant parts of Chicago. I think they now consider that neighborhood part of Hyde Park. Obama's house, I think, is only about two blocks away from this apartment that I lived in at that time. Then we managed to get into university housing right next to the campus. That's where we stayed for the rest of our time in Chicago.

03-00:45:47

Farrell: How long were you in Hyde Park for?

03-00:45:50

Walker: The total time at the University of Chicago was seven years. The kids were growing up. My daughter Janet was born while we were there. We experienced these different neighborhoods.

The University of Chicago, with the assistance of the federal government's program of urban renewal was transforming the neighborhood around the university by removing any old housing or commercial areas that were considered a blight, which they could do with urban renewal money at that time. I lived there while much of that transformation was going on. The housing we lived in had some vacant lots around it that had already been bought up and after I left, the apartment building we lived in was torn down. There's a whole athletic complex now where I had lived next to the university.

03-00:46:59

Farrell: I want to get into the urban renewal a little bit further, but I'm going to change the tape.

[Audio File 4]

04-00:00:06

Farrell: This is Shanna Farrell back with Dorothy Walker on Monday, October 13, 2014. We're in Berkeley, California and this is interview session number two, tape number four. Can you tell me a little bit about the geographic layout of the University of Chicago and how long you were in each different area?

04-00:00:32

Walker: University of Chicago is south of the Loop, the main downtown area of Chicago. It's located close to Lake Michigan. Chicago is laid out very symmetrically in terms of numbers from north or south. University of Chicago is basically at Fifty-Seventh Street, so it's fifty-seven blocks south of the Loop. The great black ghetto of Chicago at that time extended from about Twentieth Street to about Eightieth Street, with intermixing of different old ethnic neighborhoods. There was a very large African American population throughout that entire area with white enclaves that were related to big institutions, like the University of Chicago, and some of the areas to the west of the lake were more white ethnic neighborhoods. South of the University of Chicago, close to the lake, were some upper-income white neighborhoods.

The University of Chicago was probably one of the larger institutions that was not really part of the ghetto. It was situated between some great public parks—Chicago has some fantastic parks—and the beautiful lake front of Lake Michigan and the Museum of Science and Industry, one of the major institutions there near the university, along the lake.

The first neighborhood that we lived in was south of the university. One of the great Chicago boulevards built during one of the world expositions, the Midway Plaisance, was the southern border of the university. When we first moved there, we lived on Greenwood Avenue, south of the Midway. The second place we lived was in the Kenwood neighborhood, which was north of Hyde Park, south of Forty-Seventh Street. Forty-Seventh Street to Sixtieth Street (the Midway) was the university neighborhood. The third apartment we moved to was at Fifty-Fifth and Ellis and that wasn't in Hyde Park per se. Whenever I read newspaper stories about where Obama lives, it is always referred to as Hyde Park. I believe he actually has his house in Kenwood, but I think all of that area that's immediately north of Hyde Park is probably now considered part of Hyde Park. Much of Hyde Park proper was a major urban renewal area during the 1950s and '60s when urban renewal was the American way of doing racial cleansing in neighborhoods where powerful institutions wanted not to have to deal with poor mostly black people. University of Chicago was part of that in terms of all of the changes that it got to serve its needs at that time. Clearing a lot of land and property, tearing things down and rebuilding, some of which were not rebuilt right away, the university had a major hand in that. The university was the leader of the urban renewal that was going on at that time.

04-00:04:50
Farrell:

I guess with urban renewal, the whole thing is that different neighborhoods people were evicted and neighborhoods were physically torn down. Either new structures were put in or just sort of abandoned, or highways were put in. What specifically changed in Hyde Park or the South Side of Chicago during urban renewal? Do you remember if any neighborhoods were specifically divided or—

04-00:05:24
Walker:

It was more selective there. It was not the sort of wholesale urban renewal that was part of the development of the most notorious public housing in Chicago, which was built on land where they had cleared everything and then built completely socially-inappropriate high-rise buildings for some of the poor people who had formerly lived in those neighborhoods. There was no conception at that time of what kind of a neighborhood you needed to have to support a quality of life for people.

Some friends of mine bought a very old Victorian house near the university but next to them was a notorious, ancient, apartment building, a rabbit warren of very old run-down apartments, terribly maintained. I believe that had been

bought as part of the urban renewal but wasn't torn down right away so it was even in worse shape because no one was maintaining it. It was finally torn down and there was a vacant lot there for years. This was on one of the major commercial streets. There was pinpointing of problem buildings and these buildings were bought up and removed.

04-00:06:57

Farrell:

What was the university's involvement in that specifically?

04-00:07:04

Walker:

My perception at that time, was that the university was in charge of all of the plans for what would be removed. It was their neighborhood in their view and they were calling all the shots for what was happening. That was the perception of most of us at that time. I'm having a senior moment—because there was one person whose name was always associated with this who was one of the major administrators at the university.

04-00:07:41

Farrell:

Which apartment were you living at during this period of time?

04-00:07:45

Walker:

This was going on probably during the entire time I was there. I was more aware of it when I was in Hyde Park itself when I lived on Ellis Avenue.

04-00:08:00

Farrell:

What were some of the ways in which you saw the community change during that period?

04-00:08:09

Walker:

I'd like to start out saying what did I see in this community. It was racially mixed overall but basically segregated. The place that I lived in Hyde Park on Ellis Avenue was on the black (west) side of Hyde Park. The public school was about five blocks to the east, going towards the lake. That was in the white part of Hyde Park. This is all small-scale. You're talking about a small neighborhood. As I said, Hyde Park was Fifty First Street to Sixtieth Street north to south. In terms of the east-west size, twelve, fifteen blocks, maybe. We're not talking about a very big area.

My kids went to the public school called the Ray School. One summer when Tad was probably six or seven, he and friends from the neighborhood—and most of his friends from the neighborhood were African American kids who lived around where we lived—would go to play in the school playground every day because that's what they liked to do during summer vacation. Suddenly, in the middle of the summer, Tad wasn't going to play in the school playground anymore. I said, "How come you and so-and-so and so-and-so aren't going to the playground anymore?" He looked unhappy and I said, "What's the matter?" He said, "When we were over there playing games in the playground a policeman came up to us and told us to get back in our own neighborhood." He hadn't wanted to tell me that that had happened. He knew

about the racism that was already in the neighborhood and this was just a confirming aspect of it and of course he was part of that group as far as he was concerned. He and his friends were told that that wasn't their neighborhood, even though it was the school they attended. The racial issues were right up front when a policeman feels entitled to do that to six and seven-year-old kids.

04-00:10:48

Farrell:

Knowing that, did your involvement with his friends or his education change after that?

04-00:11:01

Walker:

No, I don't think so. Just the reality of it. I talked to the mothers of his friends. I began to realize how pervasive this treatment was in little things. Hyde Park had a very good co-op grocery store and I would usually go to the co-op to buy my groceries. But once in a while I would go to a little neighborhood market that was right in my neighborhood, and they gave credit, and they were much more expensive, but it was a small convenient store and it was patronized primarily by the African American families who lived around there because they gave credit. I realized after shopping there once in a while that very often when I came home that I had bought four items but I had been charged for five items. I realized that this is probably happening a lot, and it's taking advantage of people who may not be highly educated, may not be focused on what they're spending their money on. I also saw the problem of poor children and instant gratification. One of the things I learned in Chicago that poor children did not know, as I was trying to teach my children, what it meant to save money, because there was so little money, if you had it, you spent it. When these kids had a penny they would run to the store and buy a piece of candy. My kids were learning that you save up, and then you can get something that you really want. They were already controlling the way they looked at money. That was a learning experience for me to see at what an early age children learn things that are not productive for them in terms of their long life ahead of them.

I occasionally would talk to the mothers of the African American children that played with my kids about some of the kids' behavior. Once, when someone had stolen something out of my purse when they were playing in the house—I don't know which child had taken something. I discussed it with a couple of African American friends and one said, "Well, it's your fault. You should never leave anything, any money, where any child might get it. If you leave a temptation there then it's your fault that that has happened." That was also a whole way of looking at life that I never thought about and realized if you're really deprived then if there's a target of opportunity it's okay if you've taken advantage of it. That was a sobering experience, too, because I felt how are these kids managing, because the broader culture does not deal with that, and yet that was the reality of their economic life.

04-00:14:46

Farrell:

Would you consider Hyde Park to be a segregated neighborhood at that time?

04-00:14:53

Walker: Yes.

04-00:15:02

Farrell: I guess that sort of speaks to economic injustice. But were there other issues that speak to that as well? I feel like that's sort of the ramification of racial and economic injustice. That's the product of that. The racial issues with telling children to go home because they're not in the right neighborhood, that's pretty direct, but were there other ways that you saw in some facet that play out?

04-00:15:34

Walker: Clearly, the economic and social realities of all these miles of public housing, of people who were in a hopeless situation because whatever sense of neighborhood had been there had been destroyed on the basis that they were living in untenable tenements, or were considered social problems. And yet the solution, the governmental solution, was building enormous high-rise buildings that were dehumanizing and did not leave people with any of the social connections that supported them and were nurturing in any way. I was beginning to read Jane Jacobs about this time about the need for urban environments where you have a sense of belonging in some place. Systematically, as federal policy, we were destroying the kinds of ways that we need to be living together.

04-00:16:40

Farrell: Did you start to get interested in these issues because you were living in a neighborhood that was undergoing urban renewal?

04-00:16:46

Walker: I think so, and then the children started going to a nursery school that was at Forty-Third and Kenwood. This was further north. I got very involved in that nursery school, which was surrounded by an impoverished, almost entirely African American neighborhood. We were dealing with the neighborhood problems of the kids and the families that came to use that center and the kids who would go to the nursery school. In Chicago, you could go one block from affluence to poverty, and it was almost entirely racially related. This was a very eye-opening experience.

04-00:17:47

Farrell: What was the impetus for you getting involved with your children's school?

04-00:17:55

Walker: I think I'm always one who likes to do stuff and I probably like to be in charge. I also like to decide things. Maybe this is something my mother was always doing, always campaigning for some school matter or working on some public issue. I wanted the nursery school to be better, I wanted the community center to be serving the community better, and so I would volunteer to be on a committee and eventually I was the chairman of the board

of this community center because I wanted to be involved. Because my children were going there I was committed to the success of the organization.

04-00:18:48

Farrell:

You were president of the local school PTA, and then, as you mentioned, you became president of the board of directors of the Kenwood-Ellis Community Center. You mentioned that you wanted to make things better. Can you tell me more about what you mean by that and some of the things that you wanted to improve, or how you thought you could make them better?

04-00:19:08

Walker:

The tragedy there was the community center was not economically solvent. We were hanging on by our toenails. It was a very, very hard decision but when I was the chairman of the board I had to lead the board to deciding to close the center because we did not have the resources to continue to operate and the programs we were offering were less and less meaningful because we had so little resources. That was a learning experience, too, that there's something you feel deeply about and if you can't find the money for it you have to make tough decisions about what to do.

04-00:19:48

Farrell:

Did you try to find the money to improve the programs?

04-00:19:53

Walker:

I cannot remember all of the things that happened about that. I think I came on board as the ship was sinking. Whether we had been receiving money from the city that was no longer available, I do not remember now what precipitated our need to close, but somehow we simply did not have the money anymore to keep operating the programs, which were mostly after school activities that gave kids who were latchkey kids, a place to go and play basketball and have crafts and do things after school.

04-00:20:44

Farrell:

What was it like realizing that the only option was to close the community center? Can you tell me more about what that was like and how you dealt with that?

04-00:20:56

Walker:

It was hard. It was very hard. I've experienced that in other things. I'm trying to think of other examples later in my life where you have to make a tough decision and people don't want to deal with it. Maybe the Berkeley Community Fund, much later in my life. We never were able to raise the kind of money that we wanted. You have to change course in some way. We were not able to change course. We had a building that had to be maintained and we had staff that had to be paid and there wasn't enough money to pay it. I think we had a demoralized board that had lost its way. When I came on board it was in its death throes, and probably if it had not been, I wouldn't have been asked to be the chair, because somebody who would have had more tenure and more experience probably would have. So in a way, maybe I was picked

because they wanted somebody that was going to tell them what to do when they couldn't decide what to do.

04-00:22:07

Farrell:

Was that the first time that you had to tell somebody that they couldn't do something, or basically vocalize or let people know—that you had to make a hard decision and then tell people that—

04-00:22:19

Walker:

Yeah, I think so. That's a good question. I'm guessing that was the first time that I had to do that.

04-00:22:28

Farrell:

What did you learn from that experience?

04-00:22:39

Walker:

I learned that when the hard decisions have to be made, you have to make them. And you have to accept them. And you have to live with it.

04-00:22:54

Farrell:

What were the ramifications of closing the community center? Was there any push-back from the community that you had to negotiate?

04-00:23:03

Walker:

It was a lot of unhappiness. I really can't describe too much what happened, because this was just before Joe didn't get tenure and we were going to come back to California. After it closed, whether someone came in and rescued it or something else happened, I don't know. I completely lost touch with it. It was a sad time.

04-00:23:35

Farrell:

Speaking of Joe and being on campus, you wrote in your written piece that you learned a lot about being a faculty wife. Can you tell me what you mean by that and how you experienced that?

04-00:23:49

Walker:

There were several young faculty wives and one in particular that I got very close to and we socialized together and did things with the kids together. It was interesting the difference between some of the older faculty and the younger faculty. There were some very prestigious names, like Bruno Bettelheim, who were on the faculty at that time, so it was interesting the range of people that I met—people that I would have never met if I hadn't been with Joe there at the university.

Joe was doing very interesting research. He was a pioneer in sleep and dream research, and in bio feedback. His early research discovered the rapid eye movements that accompany dreaming. It was a tragedy that he never really published his research then because he became rather famous for the things he did but other people got a lot more credit than he did because he didn't publish it. He did come back and worked as a researcher at UCSF for the rest

of his working career. It was a major disappointment for him that he wasn't able to publish at that time and get tenure there.

04-00:25:19

Farrell:

What were some of the things that you learned about being on campus that you maybe took with you later? Or about how just campus politics work?

04-00:25:29

Walker:

I probably didn't know a lot about campus politics then. Joe was an untenured assistant professor. He wasn't involved in the management of the university in any way. He was working on his research. If there was a lot of internal politics going on I didn't know about it.

04-00:26:01

Farrell:

At what point did you realize that Joe was not going to get tenure and that you were probably going to leave Chicago?

04-00:26:09

Walker:

That was 1960, I guess. I think we must have known for some months that he wasn't going to get tenure. I don't remember exactly how much time we had. I was looking forward to getting back to California. My sister was very ill so I was also interested in getting back here because I really wanted to be able to see her. I was not sure that she was going to survive. When she was a freshman at Cal she was taking an antibiotic for acne that destroyed her bone marrow. She was a little bit stoic, like the rest of our family, and staggered around campus until she could hardly move, and when she finally staggered up to Cowell Hospital—at that time the university had an operating student hospital—she was covered with bruises and could hardly move. They took her blood, and Wendy said, "I'm sitting waiting for them to tell me the results of the blood test, and they rush in with a wheelchair and put me in it, and rush me and put me in bed." Her hemoglobin count was something like three or four, when your average is maybe thirteen. She was dying and was just going to the hospital for the first time. She lived in the hospital for many months. They had very little hope that she would survive, she was so ill. That happened in 1958, '59. She was still quite ill, and we were not sure that she was going to recover, which she did, although she had unknowingly contracted Hepatitis C from all the blood transfusions she had, which eventually killed her much later. That was another reason, not only that I was happy to not have to shovel the car out of the snow again. I also really wanted to be close to my baby sister.

04-00:28:38

Farrell:

When it became evident that Joe was not going to get tenure, you just had both decided to move back to Berkeley? There wasn't—

04-00:28:47

Walker:

I should have asked him before we had this interview. I cannot remember if he already lined up the job at UCSF. He must have. I remember him going off to work as soon as we came back, so he must have already lined up the research

position here because he was doing really interesting and cutting-edge, pioneering research so he got a research job. We decided to live in Berkeley. My brother, who was still living in Berkeley at that time, rented an apartment for us on Fulton Street, which was a one-way street filled with rushing commute cars. Later on in the Planning Commission, I changed all that. When I went to look at this apartment it had a steep driveway that went right out into this rushing traffic and I could not imagine having my kids living in what I thought was a much more dangerous neighborhood than I had lived in in Chicago. And so we went hunting for something else and found a small house to buy up in the hills, probably a serious mistake in terms of location, but at least it was not on a heavy traffic street. So we bought a small house in the hills rather than move into this apartment that I thought was not going to work with my rambunctious kids.

04-00:30:32

Farrell:

I guess a couple reflective questions about your time in Chicago and what you took from it. Can you tell me what changed for you in terms of your professional career or your interest in community activism after you had that experience in Chicago? How did that subsequently influence your work?

04-00:30:58

Walker:

I think I began to learn how to live an urban life there, which I had not really done. My time in Berkeley before we moved to Chicago was so constrained by getting married and having little babies and trying to survive economically that I did not experience how you live in an urban environment. I had that opportunity living around the University of Chicago—what it's like to live in walkable neighborhoods. What it's like to live in apartment buildings rather than in single-family houses. How you get around without a car, using public transportation, which of course I had been doing here in Berkeley before. That was a learning experience for me. The sense of how one neighborhood fits into the larger context of the city. I think I was just observing variety of ways that people live and became very interested in how do we live together, how do we deal with the issues of inequality, what are our cities and our governments doing that actually determine how we live, and are they making the right decisions about how we live? I'm not sure at that time I was integrating all of these thoughts but they were influencing me and I clearly became interested in the issue of city planning because it seemed to me that city planners are deciding how we live and they are the managers of change. If you're managing change, you want that change to be serving the greater good and to serving some bigger social goals. The urban renewal I was seeing was not accomplishing it and yet the city planners obviously were enabling this. I learned a lot about things that I didn't like and a few things that I did like. The whole issue became of great interest to me. This was reinforced later in my life when I started working on desegregation issues in Berkeley. At that point, it became clear to me that the problems of schools, neighborhood schools, were not the problems of the schools; they were the problems of our neighborhoods. That was in part – in major part – because of what city

planners have done to us. Real estate developers started it and city planners reinforced it.

04-00:34:06

Farrell:

Backing up a second, you said that you learned what you did like and what you didn't like about urban planning. Can you tell me a little bit more about each the good and the bad, what you did and didn't like, and maybe give me an example?

04-00:34:17

Walker:

I probably wasn't thinking about it necessarily as urban planning. I was just looking at the results. Here were programs funded with taxpayers' dollars, promoted by the federal government, that were drastically changing the way people lived. Who got to live where and who was advantaged and who was disadvantaged. They were not, in my judgment, serving the needs of the people who had the greatest needs and we were also destroying some of the very supportive things that people who need support the most needed. They were not getting it and they were being destroyed on the basis of cleaning up the neighborhood rather than having a bigger vision of what does it mean to have a community in a neighborhood.

04-00:35:21

Farrell:

Can you give me an example of, when you say cleaning up the neighborhood—

04-00:35:27

Walker:

This was the basis for tearing down tenements that probably could have been restored or completely gutted, but it was part of the whole philosophy at that time; if we have a clean slate then we can start out with something wonderful rather than repairing and adding on. The notion of fine-tuning what we were doing and looking at the long-term consequences I was becoming aware this isn't working. I don't think I knew at that point how did I think it should really work. I was just getting a glimpse of the parts of neighborhoods that did work, or ones that had a mix of different kinds or scales of apartments mixed in with single-family houses, mixed in with commercial uses where people could develop a sense of community. That was clearly something to emulate and not to sanitize a neighborhood and have a certain scale of development for rich people and then build high-rise warehouses for poor people.

04-00:37:02

Farrell:

Last question, I was about to ask you what changes you would make, but I think you perhaps just described that. Mixed-use and—

04-00:37:13

Walker:

Later on when I got on the Planning Commission for Berkeley, I made a very radical proposal to the Planning Commission that all of our single-family neighborhoods in Berkeley be rezoned and that the rezoning would require that every neighborhood have a certain percentage of different kinds of densities, and that every neighborhood had to have some commercial uses that

people could walk to. Not the notion that we have this whole hill area that is zoned for single-family houses. When I built this house I had to fight the city to change the rules in order to have a rental unit on my property. My scheme, which I'm sure a romantic notion in my very early days getting involved in planning issues, was that each neighborhood should have a quota of different densities. I think I had some numbers in it. I don't remember exactly. For example, every neighborhood had to have 20 percent of high-density housing and 10 percent of middle-density housing, and X percent of some commercial development. Once this single-family neighborhood had 20 percent of that higher-density housing, then no more housing of that density was built there. You would create a variety of housing types in each neighborhood so that people of different economic means could live there. It also would mean that old people, when they outgrew their houses, could live in an apartment in their own neighborhood. They wouldn't have to move away. Nobody does this. We have mixed-use now, but basically mixed-use is pretty much having commercial on the ground floor, or offices and commercial and residential mixes. But no one had the notion that we step into our single-family neighborhoods and change them, which is where the change needs to happen.

This was reinforced working on school integration issues which very much reflected the problems in Berkeley neighborhoods. These single family neighborhoods are still sacrosanct. In some of my later volunteer work in the last few years, looking at the zoning in Berkeley next to our major transportation corridors, we have zoning in Berkeley that's only half a block wide on our transportation corridors, and immediately behind University Avenue, for example, where we're permitted to have five, six-story buildings, it's zoned for single-family houses. Those three blocks or four blocks from every transportation corridor should be higher-density housing where people can walk to the bus lines that operate on those streets. You think we could raise that issue? It would create a firestorm. In my work with the Livable Berkeley group, which is a smart growth proponent group here in Berkeley, did manage to raise that issue in the climate change program for the city because clearly, if you're actually going to change how people live, people have to be able to walk to all the forms of transportation and they have to be able to walk to get the things they need. But we have miles of housing in Berkeley that is completely inaccessible unless you have a car. You cannot buy anything without driving from Grizzly Peak to Shattuck Avenue. That's wrong. It's not the way we should be living. I'm a dreamer, but I've been dreaming this way for a long time.

04-00:41:19

Farrell:

I think this is a great place to stop for today because when we pick up next time, we'll talk about your move back to Berkeley in the '60s and how your career here launched.

Interview 3: November 13, 2014

[Audio File 5]

05-00:00:00

Farrell:

Okay, this is Shanna Farrell with Dorothy Walker on Thursday, November 13, 2014. This is tape number five, interview number three. Dorothy, when you left off last time, we were talking about the end of your time in Chicago. I think we ended with your decision to move back to Berkeley. Can you tell me a little bit about what went into your decision to move back, or the process of moving from Chicago to Berkeley in 1960?

05-00:00:38

Walker:

I mentioned earlier the mistake Joe and I made buying the house in the hills when we came back to Berkeley from Chicago. It was on the dead-end street of Campus Drive and it had a nice view, although the house was very poorly built and we had to do quite a bit of work to improve it while we lived there. There were a number of families on the street that had children and it was a very welcoming place to be. We got acquainted with all the neighbors right away, including two doors away, the Walker family that had children, the Vishers that lived down the street, who also had children. In that sense, it was a welcoming neighborhood but we only had one car and we were high in the hills so it was not a convenient place to be. Joe set up his sleep lab at UCSF as he had had in Chicago and he spent two or three nights a week studying his subjects in this lab in San Francisco. I was often without a car. I got rather good at walking up and down the hill, which was a very long walk.

The children went to Hillside School. My daughter, Janet, was not yet school-age. I got involved in the school activities as soon as I arrived. That's something I had done in Chicago. This was 1961, I guess, and we were getting into the height of the Cold War. I can't remember exactly the year of the Cuban Missile Crisis but that was a very key height of the Cold War, when we were most fearful that we were going to go head to head with the Russians and nuclear weapons were going to be involved. I remember going to San Francisco to see the Bolshoi Ballet that was performing here at the height of this most incredibly tense thing. Evidently that had been planned for some years and the company somehow was able to come despite the incredibly intense political situation. I remember at the end of the performance everyone in the audience stood up. It wasn't a standing ovation for the performance; it was somehow a cry that we should not kill each other. It was a very, very powerful and very moving event.

One of the school issues was, the federal government decision to have a fallout shelter program throughout the country, as in their view, our way of surviving a nuclear attack. Public schools were identified as the place to have them because they were located throughout every community, they were publicly owned buildings. Big signs were posted in every public school and

they started putting in supplies, presumably that people could have if they were taking shelter there. It was a horrifying program because it was, as I saw it, it was propaganda to get people to accept the fact that a nuclear war was thinkable, that you could survive a nuclear war. If anyone really understood what the full impact of nuclear war was going to be, these schools were not going to save people's lives, and it was as if the government was trying to give us this sense of false security. The fact that we were doing it in the places where we were sending our children to school seemed to be sending the children a terrible message, too. So, some of us that were involved in the PTA decided that we needed to do something about it.

My neighbor, Bob Walker, had worked in the peace movement in the 1940s. After the end of World War II he had been the National Director of the United World Federalists, which was a peace organization formed in the late 1940s to try to achieve a real world government rather than the limited world government we had with the United Nations. It was a very idealistic and perhaps romantic notion that we might get all the countries in the world to come together and give up their armies and have a world government that would actually make decisions and adjudicate things, but he had been the executive director of that and had deeply involved in the peace movement. He did not have the strength and personality to survive in an intense political environment. He was a damaged guy. He was the child of two very neurotic parents who had fought over him and who had parented him very badly. He was a somewhat fragile person, and unfortunately, I got involved with him before I realized all of these aspects of his personality. But he was a brilliant man and he was capable of doing anything if he felt supported in an environment in which he could work comfortably.

He decided that he needed to work on this school issue and I felt passionately about it, and so the two of us, with the help of some other people, started a campaign to try to stop the use of schools for fallout shelters. It was a successful campaign. We got involved nationally. The publisher of *Scientific American* was very interested in what we were doing and was helpful to us. Bob had a lot of contacts from his past work in the peace field. We had got a professor at UCSF—why he was at UCSF escapes me—but he was an expert in polling and we got all of the congressmen to have a question in their polls of their constituents about the use of schools in this way. Then we gathered all of those results and clearly the vast majority of people didn't like what was going on but they were just accepting it. And we fed all this information back to all the members of Congress. We went back to Congress to testify against this to a Congressional committee. We took the superintendent of the Berkeley Public Schools with us and the congressmen were convinced this was a very unpopular thing to do and the program was rescinded, which was a remarkable triumph.

05-00:10:58

Farrell:

At that point, did you feel that the threat of nuclear war was possible?

05-00:11:04

Walker:

Oh, absolutely—absolutely. The Cuban Missile Crisis that I mentioned in relation to the Bolshoi Ballet being here the Russians had given missiles to Cuba where the old Batista regime had just been ousted and Fidel Castro had taken over Cuba with a radical agenda. The US had decided that we had to completely isolate ourselves from Cuba. We were not having any trade with them. It was embargoed completely, no one could travel there. Because their closest country ninety miles away was not trading with them they set up a relationship with Russia, who was very happy to have a basically communist government sitting ninety miles off the coast of the United States. This was when John F. Kennedy was president and it became a down to the wire confrontation where the United States said to the Russians, “You either get those missiles out or we’re going to start a war.” I think we all believed that it really was high noon that was going on at that time. Kind of unbelievable, to look back on it, that we somehow, having known the devastation that we had caused with the bombs that we had dropped on Japan in 1945, that we were willing to contemplate that but we were. So, it was at least a small triumph to get the fallout shelters out of our schools, although in some of the old buildings, if you’ve walked around—I haven’t done this in recent years—but the fallout shelter signs still existed in some places.

05-00:12:56

Farrell:

Did you feel like there was an alternative to fallout shelters in schools as far as protection if something had occurred?

05-00:13:05

Walker:

I think my view, and Bob certainly shared this, was we will not survive this. There is no alternative protection from a nuclear attack. Even if one survives inside a building, radiation levels outside will kill you when you emerge. We were fighting the use of schools but would have fought the use of any other public buildings as there was no guaranteed protection and the program was clearly designed to make people think a nuclear war could be survived.

The notion that war is a solution to problems—Lord knows we still live this way—is so wrong. War does not solve anything. Each time you have a war, whoever wins or loses, the remnants of feelings that are caused by those wars are the basis for the next war. World War I and what happened in relation to Germany laid the groundwork for World War II and we’re still living in the Middle East with decisions that the colonial powers made after those wars, in divvying up their turf. So, I don’t think we were looking for an alternative. We said, “We cannot accept the notion that war is something we can contemplate.” We simply have to say no to war. At least that was a small step—to let our children think that they might be safe hiding under their desks from something that had decimated hundreds of thousands of people in Hiroshima was really unbelievable. The Russians backed down and that crisis passed. The Cold War didn’t really go away until the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1989. It’s interesting to see the rumblings of a new Cold War right

now in the Ukraine and how we're going to deal with those issues, some of which are still left over from old wars in old lands.

Bob Walker and I fell in love while working on this. We divorced our mates and got married. It didn't take me more than a few months to realize that I had made a terrible mistake but I didn't know how to undo it at that point. I had already caused so much hurt to so many people and I couldn't see how we could put it back together. I made the best of my life with Bob Walker for the rest of his life. He had inherited just enough money from his grandfather that he didn't have to have a regular job. After a breakdown he had after his work as executive director of the United World Federalists he had some fear of ever being in a position where the job was controlling him rather than his being in control. So, he became a designer—a product designer and inventor and basically worked for himself. He invented a lot of different things, none of which were ever financially very successful, but it used his creative skills. Later in life, before the Zip-Loc bag was developed, he developed a self-sealing plastic bag that was quite extraordinary and he was told that it was beyond the state of the art to have a machine that would create this bag at industrial speed. He spent two years building the machine that would make these bags at production line speeds.

He was very good at inventing things but he was not a very good marketing person. You have to market something like that to Procter & Gamble or to the people who are in the bag-making business, most of whom have their own in-house inventors. He had a lot of meetings with various people but not much success. He did finally sell that patent to a European manufacturer, but then the Zip-Loc bag was invented and made his idea obsolete. That was a major disappointment for him but this was an example of a man who, if he put his mind to it, could do anything. He could make anything, he could think anything through, and one of the tragedies of his life was that he was not able to put his incredible talents to the uses that would have served society. He wanted to but he didn't have the strength of character to do it. He had a phenomenal mind. Before I met him, before the beginning of World War II, his grandmother died. His family came from Washington, DC and he moved back there to be with his grandfather who was in real estate in Washington. When World War II started, Bob took a crash course in engineering for ten or twelve weeks. He came back to the West Coast, got a job with Hewlett Packard where without a college degree in engineering he was one of the first ten engineers in 1942. He became one of the most important engineers there during World War II.

When he had the right milieu, he was able to be very successful. When he left Hewlett Packard after the war because he wanted to go back to medical school, Dave Packard offered to set up a medical division at Hewlett Packard if Bob would stay and Bob said no. Then he wandered off and got into the peace movement and found that he couldn't stand the stress of being an executive and he retreated. Interesting to see the history of someone who had

such incredible talent. Obviously he was a very attractive person to me because of his political convictions and the smarts that he had.

05-00:20:26

Farrell: What year did you get married?

05-00:20:28

Walker: We got married in 1963.

05-00:20:32

Farrell: You mentioned that he had children as well, so can you tell me a little bit about what it was like to balance your biological children and being a stepmother for the first time?

05-00:20:47

Walker: It was very difficult, and probably the most difficult thing was that Bob did not know how to be a good parent because he had been so badly parented himself. My three children from my marriage to Joe Kamiya suffered a lot because Bob did not understand how you have to—I used to tell him it's like flying a kite: you have to play out the string with children. If you pull the string tight, the kite is going to crash. You have to give children space, and you have rules, but you have to be flexible about it and you have to decide when things are important. He really never understood that. So, there were all kinds of rules about how everybody should behave and there was not much room for maneuvering. He was completely the opposite from Joe Kamiya, who thought that his children were his friends. Probably I was somewhere in the middle. I thought you have to have rules, you have to know what you want to achieve with your children, but you also have to be flexible. Joe pretty much thought the kids could do what they want and so this was a big disconnect and very hard on the children.

Joe would have the children for weekends and in the summer would have them for some weeks but he was working and so he was not really able to give them full-time attention when they would be spending time with him so that was hard. I was Bob's third wife and he had two stepsons who were young adults when Bob and I got married, and then he had two daughters, one of whom was a teenager, and one of whom was about ten years of old, the age of one of my children. Of course, they all knew each other because we had lived two doors away from each other. When Barbara, my stepdaughter, the ten year old, was a young teenager she and her mother were not getting along very well and she came and lived with us for a while. I had the experience of being a stepmother with occasional visitation but also having a stepdaughter living with me in the household.

At one point, we had six children living in the house because one of my children had a good friend whose family had moved back East and he was very unhappy back there. Young, maybe thirteen or fourteen years old, he had run away and come back to Berkeley. Maybe he was fifteen? Gary had run

into him on the street and said, “Well, what are you doing?” “I’m sort of bunking with somebody and I’m not going to school.” Gary brought him home for dinner and I was very concerned about this kid, and we got in touch with his parents and it was arranged that he would live with us until he graduated from high school. So, we had this boy, and my stepdaughter, and then Bob and I had had a child, so we had six children living in the house then. It was a bit crowded. We had one and a half bathrooms, so it was a little bit of a push. [laughter] Actually, I think the dynamics of the household were almost better with more of the kids.

I had some pretty strict rules, including how much television they could watch, and each child was permitted to watch one half, or no more than one hour of television a week, but the other kids could watch whatever program the other ones had. Nobody could pick more than one hour a week, and that actually worked pretty well. Television did not dominate our household and all the kids liked to read and do other things. I don’t know how much television they watched when they went to other people’s houses but at least that’s what happened in our house.

05-00:25:48

Farrell:

What was the age difference between you and Bob?

05-00:25:51

Walker:

Bob was thirteen years older than I, and his second wife was seven years older than he. So, the mother of his two children was twenty years older than I. She was a widow when he married her and had two boys. These two young men were young children when she was widowed. We had a really interesting family. At one point we figured that there had been somebody in the family in the Berkeley Public Schools for more than thirty years because of the big age span in this complicated family.

05-00:26:43

Farrell:

I have a couple more questions about the fallout shelter work, but before we move back to that, can you tell me about the extent to which being involved with so many children, having that many children in your life, how that affected your work or your decisions or your interest in doing planning? You move from the fallout shelter to working with desegregation in public schools, and then with parks. Can you tell me about if maybe—

05-00:27:17

Walker:

Of course, some of the areas that interested me were because they touched on my life, which was so much being a mother and having children. Working on school issues was a natural thing to do. Parks were something you used a lot when you have small children. Looking back on parenting, I think being a parent was very helpful for me being a manager later. You have to learn how to manage things and how to negotiate things. I think all of the parenting that I did, I probably had too many children not that I would give any of them up,

but I think having to manage all those children and manage the household were very useful things to know.

05-00:28:12

Farrell:

So, moving back to the fallout shelter program, you mentioned that you got the superintendent of the Berkeley Public Schools to go with you to Washington, DC. How did you get him involved in the cause and how did you impress upon him the importance of this?

05-00:28:28

Walker:

Well, we had started working through the PTA raising this as an issue before we got the national effort going. We had raised it locally and had gotten the school board interested in it and got the school superintendent interested in it because of all the political work that we were doing. When we began to make this a national issue we had a lot of interest already aroused in Berkeley. I don't remember all the people involved locally, but once the issue was raised we were not alone. This is a community that doesn't take political issues lying down—it tends to get up and do something about them. I think it was probably politically useful for the Superintendent but he was deeply committed to the fight, so it was very, very helpful to take him back to Washington and have him testify.

05-00:29:35

Farrell:

How did you organize the trip to Washington, DC?

05-00:29:40

Walker:

I don't remember. Bob probably did because, although he had lived all over the world because his father was a naval officer and then his stepfather was a geologist in foreign exploration, Washington, DC was whatever home he had had. He had mostly lived in hotels all of his life in Washington, so he certainly knew of hotels and knew where to stay and he had a cousin who was a prominent doctor in Washington. We went to visit them when we were there, so he had connections there so he probably did all the planning for that trip.

05-00:30:24

Farrell:

You wrote in your biography piece that you wined and dined your local congressman, Jeffrey Cohelan, at the Metropolitan Club. Can you tell me a little bit about that and the rest of your trip in DC?

05-00:30:38

Walker:

One of the things you do when you're working in politics is find out what things might be the most helpful politically and the Metropolitan Club was one of the great old private clubs of Washington. Because of Bob's family connections we were able to take our congressman there; he was very impressed because congressmen didn't normally get invited to the Metropolitan Club. It was a helpful thing in terms of influencing him, but we also stayed at the Hay-Adams Hotel, which is a wonderful old hotel right across from the White House, a very impressive hotel. Most impressive to me was when we walked into the hotel where Bob had lived with his grandparents

some twenty years before, the doorman said, “Hello, Mr. Walker, how nice to see you again.” I was completely blown away. Bob had not been in that hotel probably for twenty years, and yet, he had lived there for so long that the doorman remembered who he was. Amazing—also, probably says something about the social skills that doormen have over time in such places.

Bob said we were going to stay in this hotel because it’s the best hotel in Washington and I want our congressman to know that’s where we are, so it was part of the image of power that he wanted to convey in terms of accomplishing something in Washington. It was interesting for me to see this. Before we went he spent a week making sure that I would pronounce “Washington” appropriately because, as a Californian, it was “Warshington” to me, and I had to get rid of that “r” before I went to Washington. [laughter]

05-00:32:42

Farrell:

Can you tell me a little bit about why you considered this to be a successful trip and what the outcomes were?

05-00:32:52

Walker:

Well, because Congress voted to rescind the program.

05-00:32:57

Farrell:

Easy enough. So, after your work with this you were appointed to the committee to desegregate the Berkeley public schools. Can you tell me about the process of your appointment and what your role was when you were working on that committee?

05-00:33:13

Walker:

I don’t remember the process. I think letters of recommendation were sent, and that happened while I was in the transition of marrying Bob. I probably was nominated as Dorothy Kamiya and it may have been the Japanese name that helped me get on that committee. I don’t know because that was literally the time I was in the middle of divorcing Joe. That committee was a wonderful experience. It had a wide range of community leaders and activists and university professors—people who had various points of view. No city at that time had tried to desegregate schools that were segregated by de facto segregation rather than de jure segregation. In 1954, *Brown v. Board of Education* said you cannot legally segregate children but Berkeley was segregated based upon the land use practices and the socioeconomic divisions in the city.

My work on desegregation was very influential on my views about planning, realizing that in order to desegregate our schools we had to eliminate the concept of neighborhood schools. In my view there was no way to maintain neighborhood schools and integrate the schools because our neighborhoods were wrong. Our neighborhoods didn’t have a mix of people. They didn’t have an economic mix, they didn’t have a racial mix, and all of this had been put in place by zoning, by the city’s land use controls. Berkeley being a fairly

small city it was a problem that we hoped that we could get our arms around in terms of what the solutions would be. But it was clear to me very early on that we could not do what some cities dealing with de jure segregation did put the minority children and the African American children on buses and take them to white neighborhoods. It had to be a two-way street, it had to affect everybody and it had to be as equitable as possible in the way it would work. That was the thing that I fought for and the thing that we agreed that we needed to do.

I did some research on how people deal with change while I was working in that committee. Some of the research indicated that you have to affect as many people as possible whenever you're doing some major changes. It wasn't only the equity issue, if you affect everybody then no one feels singled out. Maybe nobody likes everything that's happening but if everybody is affected then it's somehow somewhat more acceptable. So, that was my thinking, not only the equity issue but we have to affect everybody. What we did end up with did affect everybody and we had a whole cohort of basically upper income white people who did not like the fact that their children wouldn't be going to the school nearest to them and they moved out of town. The demographics of Berkeley changed somewhat because Berkeley had, prior to that, been pretty much a conservative town. Not that it wasn't cutting-edge on a lot of things, but there was a pretty even balance of liberals and conservatives in Berkeley. Most of the really conservative people who had families in Berkeley moved away and it was my understanding that a lot of the growth in Orinda and the area immediately over the hills were the families who left Berkeley at that time.

05-00:37:52
Farrell:

So, aside from people moving and the growth of Orinda, the final plan that you proposed was met with much public outcry and an attempt to recall the school board. Can you tell me more about that, what the other aspects of the outcry was, and the attempt to recall?

05-00:38:13
Walker:

The outcry was really resistance to change. The rest of my adult life I've been dealing with problems of change because that's what planners do. Planners are managers of change, and this was a precursor to my planning work. How do you deal with people's reluctance to change things? It requires an enormous amount of fortitude and willingness to live with failure all the time because people, by nature, don't want to change things very much. Interestingly, this community that prides itself on being so progressive really doesn't change things very much. Change is fought, as we can see in the most recent election, that we finally for the fourth time had beaten the people who don't want to change the downtown. So, we have to keep vigilant about it.

People did not want to publicly reject the notion that we needed to have our schools be more diverse, so I think most people tried to put some other twist

on their opposition. They didn't want to come out and say, "I'm just a racist and I don't want my children going to school with black children." We've always had just one public high school in Berkeley, so the notion that your children will always be in some protected enclave with their own racial group would not happen throughout the whole school career of children in Berkeley. It was helpful that we have always had just one high school and any attempt in the past to have thought about having two high schools—because for a while Berkeley High School was a huge school when people had more children—was always rejected because it would result probably in two segregated high schools in terms of the geography of where people live. People were very careful, I think, to try not to be racist but it was fundamentally racial anxiety that was involved. It also meant that children were being moved by buses.

The city was divided into strips east to west. Instead of having K-6 schools throughout the city we designated the smaller schools in each strip to be K-3 schools, and the larger schools would be 4-6 schools. Depending on where you lived and what age you were, you had to go on a bus to go to the other school. The downside of that, that was still a problem that I could not fix, was that the smaller children who could go to their neighborhood schools and were not bused were the predominantly upper income white families because the smaller schools were in the hills. The larger schools were in the flatlands. So it was still somewhat inequitable that the younger white kids could go to their neighborhood schools. After the attempt to recall the school board failed and the people who were unhappy left, the school board spent at least two or three years implementing it so it wasn't imposed immediately, but when it was imposed it happened to everyone, so that was very good. My youngest child was one of the first kids to go to one of the flatland schools, so it was an interesting process to see that personally.

I continued to stay involved with school things after that. I worked on a number of different PTA committees and committees dealing with the fact that we have a bimodal distribution of achievement in Berkeley. The demographics have changed a lot since then but at that time we had a large group of mostly working class African American families, and we had a large group of mostly highly educated, university related professionals and they not only lived in different parts of town but they had very different cultures in terms of preparation and expectations about education. The ability of our schools to deal with this huge problem, which is basically a deep social and economic justice problem, that is the heritage of slavery and we have not in any way recovered from it. It's gotten worse in the last thirty years, in terms of the loss of all of the well-paying blue collar jobs, so that the African American community was very disproportionately affected by the income inequality growth that's occurred over the last thirty or forty years. It's very hard, sitting here today and looking at all the things that I've worked on that have changed so little.

05-00:44:36

Farrell:

So, you worked with the PTAs to address this achievement gap and a lot of that has to do with structural, social, and economic issues. Can you tell me how those manifested in Berkeley?

05-00:44:52

Walker:

Well, we have unemployment rates—it'll be hard for me to talk about the facts on the ground back in the 1960s. It was a long time ago and the population was very different then. Berkeley has become a much more gentrified community and has a much smaller population of low income and working class people, and has a much lower population of people of color. The problems are social problems in that African Americans have been discriminated against in employment, in housing and in education historically and trying to fix in one community this long, long history that is deeply embedded in our culture is very difficult. As witness what's happened in the last six years with an African American president who clearly is hated by a whole section of people in this country because he's a black man and they cannot deal with the leader of our country being a black man. The ugly side of the attacks upon him over the past years have always been there and we've seen it and we've known about it.

We experienced it and we've seen it in elections, but in our own community, the impact of that kind of discrimination that is deeply embedded in our culture is here, too. It's here, too, and the impact on children growing up in families that have not had the opportunity for education and have not had the wealth to give their children the kind of experiences that the highly educated, mostly white population in Berkeley have given their children, that's a gap that the schools cannot close. The schools cannot make up that gap and I'm not sure we can fix it until we completely change our view of how we allocate public monies, until we tax ourselves much more than we're doing now, until we have full employment with living wages, until we have early childhood education that is truly effective with very young children. The public schools cannot help a child enough if before five or six if they have not had the enrichment in their own home environment that people of privilege are able to give to their children.

05-00:48:09

Farrell:

You also worked on, with the PTA, a plan to change the school system from a semester to a quarter system?

05-00:48:19

Walker:

That was one of my proposals, recognizing that the traditional way that teaching occurs is children go to school for a set period of time and if they haven't learned it, they're either held back for another year, or in most cases we have social promotion in the sense, "Oh, we don't want this kid to be too old so we'll promote him even though he did not learn the content in this period." I proposed to the committee that we change the paradigm. Historically we've held the time constant and the learning variable and yet we

have children coming from a variety of backgrounds, a variety of levels of preparation and we've put them all together in a classroom and we ask the teacher to teach all these kids, 30 of them at a time even though they may be starting from all these different places she's supposed to have them all end up over here in the same place at the end of nine months. That didn't work and it seemed to me we needed to change that.

So, I worked up a rather elaborate scheme. I thought it might work in Berkeley because we had enough people who, at that time the university was on the quarter system, would be willing to take their children out of school at different times of the year if we ran the schools on a year-round basis—which is a very good use of our physical plant anyway—and each child was assigned to three of the four quarters of the year. The parents would negotiate with the schools what quarters they would go in relation to what their other kids were doing. But if a child was having difficulties completing the material, they would go the fourth quarter to give them extra time to learn the content of that grade. My view was not only would we built in the extra time but we would shake up the system because the teacher would have in her class children who had different times when they had entered the system for her. So he or she, the teacher, had to address where is this child individually rather than “I'm going to teach this whole group something.”

It was a way to force individualization of instruction on the teacher. Of course, it was a radical idea. I still think there's a kernel of something in this idea. I think a lot of the really good teaching methodologies that some of the most forward-thinking people are doing are really trying to individualize instruction so that you do teach the child where they are. I'm not sure that this testing regime that we're now imposing on children is going to accomplish it. It's upsetting to me to see that we're not dealing with the root causes of why we have these huge achievement gaps. They're deeply embedded in our culture—the schools cannot fix all of this. Has to be fixed another way. In fact, my radical scheme that never went anywhere wouldn't fix it all either, but it was at least an attempt to try to adapt our system to the fact that we have children who have different levels of learning abilities because of either the enrichment they've had or the deprivation they've had in their life experiences.

05-00:52:27

Farrell:

How did you feel when that plan wasn't implemented?

05-00:52:36

Walker:

I'm always full of big ideas so I'm used to things that I've proposed not necessarily going anywhere. We started working on other things. For example, the schools had a tracking system—basically students were assigned to a track based upon the grades achieved and so all the kids who were high achievers and the kids who weren't doing well were in different tracks and were assigned to different classes with different content and expectations. We

managed to get that modified. I don't think when I was working we managed to get rid of it entirely but I don't think they have it anymore. It labeled you from the time you entered the high school and made it almost impossible for those who were behind to ever catch up.

It's interesting talking about schools because with all of my work on desegregation and then the work I started doing on planning, I truly felt that getting rid of neighborhood schools would help us change our neighborhoods because people could not be buying real estate based upon where their children would go to school. At that time, we didn't have private schools in Berkeley. I think there was only one private school in Berkeley. Everybody was committed to the public schools. The most unbelievable and dismaying thing that happened, in the '60s and '70s as part of the great anti-authority, anti-public institutions that came with the Vietnam War, was suddenly alternative schools were really attractive, and attractive to some of the most progressive people in town. "Oh, yeah, I should be sending my kid to this avant-garde school because public schools are just run-of-the-mill and I need to be doing something more creative and we should be more open about what's happening."

The whole concept that was fundamental to me, in desegregating the schools and thinking about how it was going to change neighborhoods completely went out the window because it became politically acceptable for the most progressive people in this town to send their children to private schools. It never happened before. We had a whole cohort of people who did it for presumably "correct" reasons, which I don't agree with. It became okay for people who didn't really want their kids bused to a predominantly African American part of town; they had a lot of cover then to send their kids to private schools. So in the late '60s and '70s the whole private school movement basically destroyed, the good confluence of events between what we had done with the schools and how we might change our neighborhoods. Those private schools, there are plenty of them and lots of the kids go there. Fortunately, the public schools have continued to be pretty good in Berkeley and so they haven't had a wholesale loss of a range of students. But it hurt the schools a lot because they lost a lot of the people who would put a lot of energy into making the schools do well. That was a huge, huge downturn. To me we haven't fully recovered from that.

A lot of young families have come to live in Berkeley in recent years and are sending their kids to public schools, so we have a lot of people who now are beginning to be really interested. I think this is a really, really good sign. But unfortunately we have a lot less diversity in Berkeley now so that's the big downside.

05-00:57:07

Farrell:

How much of your interest in this, in desegregation and addressing structural issues, had to do with your time in Chicago during the period of urban renewal?

05-00:57:21

Walker:

Certainly the urban renewal in my neighborhood of Chicago was clearly the University of Chicago wanting to remove the predominantly minority, low income population that was increasingly populating the neighborhood in the university environment. Of course, Chicago was one of the most notorious places in terms of the miles and miles of public housing, of basically segregated public housing that stretched all along the South Side and marched right up next to the university neighborhood. I saw up close exactly what was happening there and it certainly had a significant influence on my views about how urban renewal could totally change a neighborhood. It did change that neighborhood fundamentally and permanently. You go back to that neighborhood now it's a very high-income neighborhood all around the university. The university acquired a lot of property as part of that urban renewal and simply tore down houses, including a university building I had lived in, to create all kinds of new facilities there.

05-00:58:50

Farrell:

I'm going to change the tape.

[Audio File 6]

06-00:00:00

Farrell:

Okay, this is Shanna Farrell back with Dorothy Walker on Thursday, November 13, 2014. This is tape number six, session number three. So, corresponding with your work with the PTA, you were appointed to the Berkeley Planning Commission and you were first appointed to a city committee to plan two parks in North Berkeley, which were a former quarry at Glendale, La Loma and then an old park at the Codornices. You had also mentioned that you were instrumental in reclaiming the land for recreational use. Can you tell me a little bit about coming on board to this commission and the city committee?

06-00:00:57

Walker:

We didn't have a parks and rec commission, then, the Planning Commission did almost everything. This was a committee that reported to the Planning Commission. Codornices Park is a long-time historic park right up the street here on Euclid, across from the Rose Garden. It had a very large parking lot in the level area of the park and much of the park is in the foothills and the slopes that go up along Codornices Creek. There weren't a lot of play areas for kids that were level or places for equipment. Part of the plan—and I'm sure that the people I worked with on that committee were in agreement—was that if we removed the parked cars and the parking lot we would have a whole level area of the park that we could use for park purposes.

There were some people who were very worried about spillover parking and how it would impact the neighborhood. But we recommended that all that parking be removed and that it was not the purpose of the park district to be providing places to park. People should get to the park however they could. That was very successful park and the Glendale, La Loma Park has a very tiny parking area. That was a fun park because it has three different levels. We had a tot lot for little kids on the upper level and a few parking places there because it was up on the hillside and we assumed that people would drive there with little kids. Then the middle level had play equipment for bigger kids and the lower level was a great ball field, a playing field and it's also used a lot for archery now. It's a wonderful park because it has a pathway that you can walk all the way through that connects to other paths. You can walk almost all the way from Shattuck to Grizzly Peak on pathways.

I live on Euclid and I can leave my house and in half an hour I can be at Grizzly Peak and Tilden Park using the paths that go through the parks or go up through the neighborhoods that were established back in the '20s and '30s; wonderful paths. Those parks were quite successful and Codornices has continued to be a major park. A big ball field was reclaimed from some of the old reservoir space when they rebuilt the adjacent reservoir some years ago.

06-00:04:07

Farrell:

You also mentioned in your biography piece that this was your first experience corralling the dominance of the auto. Can you tell me a little bit more about that?

06-00:04:22

Walker:

It's my hindsight looking back because that was the first time I had done something which said people's uses and everything related to human uses are much more important than where we store our vehicles. When I got on the Planning Commission a major part of my work was working on transportation and changes in streets in our neighborhoods. This was the first time I had said, "Okay, we have a small amount of land, it's supposed to be a park, and we're not going to use it for parking cars. We're going to use it for park purposes." So it was my first time to corral the automobile.

06-00:05:11

Farrell:

Can you tell me a little bit about the power of the car in Berkeley?

06-00:05:17

Walker:

Berkeley is a suburban town and its geography with the flatlands and the hills caused two very different street patterns. In the flatlands and in the commercial areas of Berkeley there is a grid street system with some variations but pretty much a typical grid system. You have some places with a little density of housing along the arterial streets but in the hill areas the streets were planned to curve along the contours of the hills. Some of the streets were designed for the streetcars which were used for public transportation before major use of private cars. Many of the paths I just mentioned were used to

connect pedestrians from the winding streets above directly to the streetcars that operated on Euclid and on Spruce Street in those days. Historically, there was a much better public transportation system than we have now because we had streetcars before buses in many Berkeley neighborhoods. I lost my train of thought, here.

06-00:06:58

Farrell:

The geographic differences in Berkeley?

06-00:06:59

Walker:

Yes. The geography was related to how the land was zoned, so that the flatlands were zoned for higher density uses and the hill areas were zoned for, not larger lots because Berkeley's always had small lots but for single-family homes—the suburban low density model. If you go to Naples or European cities that are built on hillsides you don't have to restrict your hillsides to single-family homes. San Francisco is a good example, too. Berkeley designed these meandering streets that related to public transit. Until after World War II the city prohibited parking on the street at night. You had to have a garage or you had to have a driveway to park your car. Berkeley was a fairly fully developed city but there was very good public transportation so there was less car use. There were a few vacant lots here and there but a lot of the hill area was developed before World War II. Not the upper hills, but most of the hill area was developed, all with low density single family homes.

There was a time when Berkeleyans managed to get along without the number of cars that they have now. Berkeley now has a very large number of cars in relation to its population. I'd still love to see a jitney system and we now have the capability of people using shared rides electronically that would be actually economic. When I served on the city's downtown plan committee a few years ago one of the things I got into the plan was some follow-up studies with the university on some ideas such as that. It seems to me that we could get a lot of people out of their cars with much more sophisticated forms of shared rides than the buses that still run on fixed routes. Although they carry people we could have many, many more people sharing rides with a more sophisticated system. I'm hoping at some point, I get somebody interested in that.

The whole approach to transportation after World War II was accommodation of cars. All the freeway system was federally funded and anybody who studies planning knows we almost destroyed our cities by the notion that everybody wanted to live in the suburbs. We built this enormous infrastructure with public funds to create access to what had been our agricultural areas and our green fields and had people living there at very low densities who could not get around at all without a car. This was Robert Moses on steroids in California. We gave an enormous subsidy to people to drive a private car. At the same time we were starving our public transportation systems. We used to have trains and streetcars that ran throughout the entire Bay Area; we used to

have a streetcar that ran all the way out on a pier two miles into the bay and met a ferry. You could go from the campus to downtown San Francisco in thirty-five minutes in 1920, as my mother used to do when she was a student at Cal and sold lingerie in the Emporium in San Francisco.

We destroyed a lot of those systems because, oh, we have all these nice ways to get around in our private cars and that's what we'll do. So, Berkeley just like everybody else, kept widening streets and accommodating cars. In 1958, the university and the city made an agreement to widen all of the streets around the campus. Not only did they widen Oxford and Bancroft and Hearst Avenue, but they put in what is referred to as a free-right turn on each of those corners so a car doesn't have to stop at a stop sign in an intersection; it can simply cut around the corner. This made all of those intersections much more dangerous for pedestrians or bicyclists. I have been trying to undo these things and trying to get back some of the transportation networks that we had in the past.

06-00:12:14

Farrell:

So, this is a good segue into your time on the Planning Commission, to which you were appointed to in 1967. You had served on that commission for eight years. I guess let's start this way: can you tell me about the first issue that you worked on as part of that commission, if you can remember?

06-00:12:41

Walker:

I'm not sure what the first issue was. It probably was a rezoning issue to permit some apartment buildings near the campus.

06-00:12:56

Farrell:

So, yeah, one of the things that you had mentioned that you worked on was zoning. So, there was West Berkeley redevelopment and the BART stations in the flatland. Is that what you're referring to or is that something different?

06-00:13:12

Walker:

The BART system was in planning at that time and the voters of Berkeley had voted independent of the rest of the system to underground BART entirely in Berkeley, which none of the other communities had done. The original plan for BART was to be undergrounded only in the downtowns but Berkeley didn't want any other side of the tracks aspect of a transit system. In contrast to all the rest of the BART system when you enter Berkeley your train is underground. BART tried to design the transition structures so that they would cross the boundaries between Albany on the north and Oakland on the south, but the city brought a lawsuit saying, "our voters said it was undergrounded entirely in our city and those transitional structures have to be in the other cities, they can't be in Berkeley." If you're on foot or in a car you may notice those wonderful art pieces at the Stanford and Martin Luther King intersection at the Oakland Berkeley line that say "HERE" and "THERE." To me, that's a little bit of what we were thinking about in terms of BART—that we were the "here" people where our BART is underground and the "there" people were

on the other side where BART is aboveground. I don't know if that sculpture is related to that, but it always makes me think about that when I drive by that wonderful sculpture.

The BART decisions had basically been made by the time I got on the commission, so I wasn't involved in making decisions about BART itself but about what would happen in the downtown. The downtown, Shattuck Avenue, was torn up for construction of BART at that time. One of the early things I remember was the Bank of America. There is a little one-story bank sitting there now but there had been at that site a very beautiful five or six-story historic building that had been torn down before my time. The Bank of America came to the Planning Commission and wanted to know what they should do in the downtown as Shattuck Avenue would be redesigned after BART construction was completed. The bank decided to build basically a throwaway building—the little building that's there now rather than any major investment in the most important intersection downtown right across from the new BART station. Interestingly, that's the site now proposed for a major hotel that will probably happen as the attempt to overturn the downtown plan that was just on the ballot was defeated roundly. We will probably get a new hotel that will include the Bank of America, the land owner, as part of the redevelopment of that site.

The use of the BART right of way for a linear park along Hearst Avenue was popular but the issue of the development around the North Berkeley BART station was a major political issue at that time. The neighborhood fought very hard to keep the zoning very low around that station. It's interesting that I cannot recall what position I took on that at that time. It was clearly a very foolish decision to maintain single-family density around a major BART station. The locations of the BART stations had already been determined and they were bad locations. Number one, our major employment area was West Berkeley. No BART station. The major employer in the East Bay is the University of California. No BART station. Unbelievable now that the whole design of the BART system was to bring the worker residents of suburbia to Oakland and to San Francisco. Berkeley was not perceived as a destination and there was no consideration of where the major centers of travel activity might be that should be served. So, we have a station in the downtown which is appropriate, but we have no station at the University of California, which is crazy. We have no station in West Berkeley but we put a station in the middle of a very low density residential area that required everybody to drive to get to it; it was not a good thing for the neighborhood. But if we're going to have a BART station we ought to have some density around it. I do not recall where I was on that issue, but clearly, the neighbors won out, in the sense that we never rezoned for high density development around that BART station.

06-00:18:48

Farrell:

So, you mentioned there was some controversy around that. Can you unpack that or explain that to me a little bit, what that controversy was?

06-00:18:53

Walker:

Well, there's always a controversy when you discuss changing land use. I do not recall the impetus for rezoning, whether it came primarily from BART or whether it was planning staff. It'd be interesting to try to delve back into that because I haven't thought about this for a long time. As I say, I cannot remember where I came down on this. Knowing where I am now and where I've been most of my career, I would have said we need high-density zoning around a BART station but that BART station was put in absolutely the wrong place. The controversy was someone had proposed what was appropriate rezoning for that whole neighborhood around the BART station, the neighborhood resisted very strongly and the city agreed with the neighborhood and did not upzone that neighborhood.

06-00:19:55

Farrell:

That also served as your introduction to Mike Heyman. Can you tell me about your first encounter with him?

06-00:20:02

Walker:

I already knew him somewhat because he was a professor of law and city planning but he lived in Berkeley and he was a participating citizen. I'd worked with Mike on a school issue. He was either the chair or had a major role in a school bond issue that I was involved in so I had gotten acquainted with him there. When I was working on some land use issues on the Planning Commission I had come up with a zoning idea that was a radical idea. It was an outgrowth of my concerns that we were not achieving the changes the neighborhoods that I wanted because zoning was so restrictive. I made a proposal to the Planning Commission that we consider rezoning all of the single-family neighborhoods in Berkeley and that the rezoning would have a completely different principle of determining how land should be used; that we would divide the city into small neighborhood areas and each small area would have a percentage of different densities that would be permitted.

I don't remember if I had numbers in this proposal but let's say 25 percent of the land in this neighborhood can be used for five-story buildings. When 25 percent of the land had achieved five-story buildings then you couldn't build any more five-story buildings in that neighborhood. Thirty percent would be for three-story buildings, or whatever, and I'm not sure how much detail I went into. The principle was to change our single family neighborhoods because they segregate everybody racially, economically and socially. They also were segregating people pretty much by age as there were no smaller-scale buildings or apartment buildings that older people might want to live in when they didn't want to live in their big houses. This was before Prop 13 glued all the old people in their houses because it was tax-advantageous to stay in them. I went to talk to Mike Heyman about this idea because he was a professor of city planning and he thought it certainly was perfectly legal and was an interesting idea. Nobody on the Planning Commission wanted to bite it off. It's still almost impossible in Berkeley to raise the issue of increasing the density in our single-family neighborhoods.

We now want taller buildings along all of the major arterial streets; we want people living next to the streets where we have public transportation, but the zoning on almost all of those streets is less than a block wide. In most places, it's one-half a block. So a new five-story building on University Avenue, for example, might be right up against a single-family house that faces on the block behind it. Instead of being able to develop even a whole block for a building, you now have these little slivers that are zoned for the taller buildings. You get inappropriate kind of development and you got a really bad use of the land. More importantly, if we really are serious about people using public transportation then we should be having higher density at least three blocks on either side of these arterial streets. That's the only way to begin to change the way people live.

Back to controlling the automobile, one way you get people out of their cars is by having higher density housing on and all around the arterial streets. It is almost impossible to ever talk about that. I was involved with a Livable Berkeley environmental group for some years and we did manage to get a hint of this into the city's climate action plan. It would be a political third rail in this town but maybe before I die I'll talk about it.

06-00:25:08

Farrell:

Can you tell me what makes that hard to talk about and why that would be a political issue?

06-00:25:15

Walker:

People love their single-family neighborhoods and they fight to keep them that way. Where there is zoning that permits a mix of things there's normally a battle about any new development. People want the density that they've had before. As real estate has become more and more valuable all of these small houses that are in areas that should have been rezoned and redeveloped a long time ago, now are so valuable people are even more protective of them and their neighborhoods. We have a very long-term problem that goes back to the '60s, when we used to have a lot of higher density zoning. In the '60s and '70s there was huge interest in controlling development because developers make money and therefore, perforce, this is bad. I split with the Left in Berkeley when I was on the Planning Commission because they tried to stop development. Their view, which was related to rent control and the whole philosophy of that time to devalue property enough so the tenants will be able to buy the buildings and everybody will live in co-ops and we won't have any landlords anymore. But if we still have developers going then this system won't work.

So the Left, working with neighborhood protectionist people, put in place a neighborhood preservation ordinance over my sort of dead body when I was on the Planning Commission that controlled any changes in single-family neighborhoods and required discretionary review for any new development. We're still living with the problems this created because we suppressed

development in this town for many, many, many years and we're just now trying to do development because of the housing crisis. Everything is very expensive and very hard to do now as all the real estate has become so valuable. We did not do housing development continually over many years when we should have been doing it. San Francisco has pretty much the same problem. I don't think they had so much ideology in terms of stopping development as it was here but it was basically "don't change stuff; we like things the way it is."

The Left and the Right still come together to stop development in Berkeley. They are strange bedfellows. Some neighborhood people and historic preservationists want to keep things as they are. The supposed-Left wants to stop developers and somehow think we can get the low income and affordable housing we desperately need by making development very difficult. So we have to fight over and over for a plan for more housing and we have to fight building by building to get any built. Meanwhile Berkeley becomes less and less diverse and increasingly a place for high income people so neither the Left or the Right get what they want and those of us who want a much more urban, sustainable and diverse community do not get what we want either.

06-00:28:13

Farrell:

You also worked on the downtown plan and I have read that when BART was being put in and proposed that it did tear up Shattuck and a lot of businesses subsequently closed. Can you tell me a little bit about your downtown plan and if it was partially in response to this issue with BART?

06-00:28:35

Walker:

I've worked on three downtown plans three different times. I worked on one on the Planning Commission, I worked on it again as a university rep when the city was working on a new plan in the '80s and early '90s, and after I retired from the university I worked on a downtown plan representing the city. So, I've been around the barn on downtown plans. I know I worked on it on the commission but I have very little memory of what we did. We did some dumb things. Before BART, the whole center of Shattuck Avenue was an enormous parking lot that ran all the way down the middle. Well, we didn't like that, but the merchants were insistent that we not take away too much parking. So, the compromise was what is there now, which is the angled parking behind the divider strips that are on the edges of Shattuck. Shattuck is an enormously wide street because it used to have a train station—a major train station right at University and Shattuck—and the train tracks came all the way down Shattuck. It was an enormous opportunity to do something very grand.

I don't think I had the vision then and I don't think anybody on the planning staff had the vision. I think the merchants were hurting so much from the years of things being torn up for BART that the plan that we came up with satisfied their feelings that there had to be parking places in front of their

stores. It included a lot of greening of downtown and it certainly got all of the big parking lot out of the middle of the street so it was an improvement. But it was not the best overall solution and what we're now trying to do is fix that. Some of the things we just did on the downtown plan, this last plan I worked on, are trying to fix and redo the things that we didn't do right back in the '70s.

06-00:31:05

Farrell:

One of the other issues that you had worked on is improvements to public transportation. Can you tell me a little bit about what you were trying to achieve with that work?

06-00:31:21

Walker:

There were two major transportation issues that I worked on. One was how do we protect residential streets from through traffic? At that time Berkeley had a system of one-way streets, Fulton and Ellsworth for example were two high-speed one-way streets that ran all the way from Ashby to Bancroft Way. They were basically throughways to get across town as quickly as possible. There were all kinds of shortcuts through neighborhoods that people took to avoid congestion at various intersections. There were many, many parts of town that were inundated with cars. One of the things we were trying to accomplish in the Planning Commission is how to have some tranquil neighborhood spaces and concentrate the traffic on our arterial streets? We also thought that concentrating the cars on the arterial streets would require reducing the number of those cars or we're going to have a lot of traffic congestion on those arterial streets. We needed to improve our public transportation.

It was viewed as a package that we were putting together and we were working with AC Transit to increase the frequency of service on different routes and put in some new routes. We did manage to redesign some of the one way system but, it didn't take away them all. We're now talking about finally removing them on Durant and Bancroft and the other streets in the South Campus that we did not change at that time. Certainly the Fulton-Ellsworth pair, which were the most notorious one-way streets, we removed those. Then we installed diverters wherever there was a cut-off that someone might take to bypass a major street and go through a residential neighborhood to get to their destination. We put in a traffic diverter that would force drivers to go back to an arterial street rather than be able to cut through the neighborhoods. That's why you have a little trouble way finding. I had a major hand in designing all this system. I still have trouble way finding once in a while when I go to neighborhoods that I don't go to very often because I've forgotten how it works. So, we all have to struggle with that and learn about it.

When we were designing that system I had my first experience trying to navigate bureaucracies and their resistance to change because the fire department did not want any of these diverters put in. They did not want to get

rid of the one-way streets. They wanted everything just the way it had been. Fighting the fire department was a major issue and the diverters were designed so that the fire engines can go through the center so we did accommodate that kind of traffic without letting other vehicles get through. The corollary improvements to public transportation required action that the city could not control, we did not have the money to operate our own system and AC Transit made only minimal improvements. As I mentioned earlier, I would love if the city and the university would collaborate on what I would refer to as a shared ride jitney system because I think we could augment the existing public transportation in a very productive way and help relieve the number of cars that are around.

The demographic changes in Berkeley have not helped us with cars because we have more affluent people, they own more cars, and, with the dispersion of places to work throughout the Bay Area and the high cost of housing we have many more people now who live here but don't work here and people who work here but don't live here. There has been some trend towards people using more public transportation. There are more people who want to live close to conveniences and, there's more bike riding and walking than there used to be. But we now have a lot of people who live regionally rather than locally and we've created part of that problem ourselves by not building any new office buildings and not building any more housing. We have contributed to this incredible imbalance between home and work in Berkeley.

06-00:36:21

Farrell:

Going back to the system of traffic diverts, the question has been raised before that in an effort to make some of the neighborhoods quieter and more residential that it also keeps people out of Berkeley. Was that a consequence that you had foreseen?

06-00:36:48

Walker:

I don't think that was discussed. It certainly was no one's intention to keep people out. The intention was that you get here on our main streets. You don't get here driving through our residential neighborhoods. A major problem was that some of our main streets are residential streets. For example, the Claremont-Belrose corridor is a residential street and it has more than twenty thousand cars a day. There was no way that we could take that street out of the arterial system because there's no good alternative street nearby. The campus blocks all the traffic in the middle of the city. You've got an eastern route to get across the campus and you have the western routes to get around the campus. That neighborhood was really upset that we had no solution for them. Their major arterial street is College Avenue, one of the narrowest streets that is also a transit street and one of the most congested streets in Berkeley with one of the most productive and important transit lines where buses are only running two or three miles an hour because of the amount of traffic. There was no way, unless someone were to build an enormously expensive new route that would go through the high hills behind what is now the Clark Kerr

Campus, that you could ever protect some of those residential streets. But we did protect the streets within that neighborhood, “Okay, the people who live on this corridor are going to live with the traffic, but the rest of the neighborhood will be protected.”

These were tradeoffs and they were hard because we didn’t get the public transit improvements we wanted. Fortunately, traffic adjusted itself to the conditions. Alan Jacobs, who was the planning director for San Francisco in the 1970’s and then a professor of planning here on campus for many years, was someone I’ve learned a lot from. Alan’s view is to ignore traffic problems. You have to decide what you want your city to be. What kind of development do you want? How do you want to live in the places you have in your city? You can’t plan it on the basis of where people will park or how they drive. If you have land uses that serve the community people will adapt to congestion and you just don’t worry about where will the cars go. Alan’s philosophy is very like my first planning decisions in Codornices Park when we removed all the parking to improve the park and decided not to worry about where the cars would go.

We restricted auto use on a lot of streets for thirty-five years and it’s amazing to me when I either walk or drive in those neighborhoods to see how tranquil they are. People now live peacefully in neighborhoods that were almost unlivable because of the amount of traffic that they had in front of their houses. And the people driving have continued to manage even as their numbers have increased and no additional street capacity has been added. I think we need to keep going more and more in this direction.

I live on a major street here myself and I’ve designed my house to protect myself from the traffic. A lot of the small apartment buildings along College Avenue have built walls along the street to create some private space and protect themselves from the traffic.

There’s no good answer to getting major improvements to public transportation when our public sector is so impoverished because we have restricted so much how we can tax ourselves. Prop 13 has hurt this state, this county, this city, has hurt our education system, it has hurt everyone. The fact that we’ve never changed most of it—and particularly, never changed it in relation to taxing commercial properties—is almost unbelievable to me. We used to have the finest educational system in the world and now we’re down near the bottom. The University of California used to be supported by the state. It now basically is becoming a private institution because its money is mostly private. It’s discouraging. It’s discouraging to get old and realize that this isn’t going to get fixed in my lifetime.

06-00:41:30
Farrell:

Back to the traffic diverts, which is something that you certainly—

06-00:41:33

Walker: I'm sorry for this digression. [laughter]

06-00:41:35

Farrell: No, it's absolutely fine. I have a bunch of questions about this because I feel like the traffic diverts definitely shape the fabric of the city and so it's very interesting to see where that comes from. They can be a little bit difficult to maneuver on a bicycle. How much were bicyclists considered when planning where to insert those diverts?

06-00:41:59

Walker: We certainly wanted to facilitate bicyclists and the assumption was that bicyclists would go through them. It's interesting to hear that you think that it is a problem.

06-00:42:13

Farrell: It's only because some of them turn into a one-way street, so you can't keep going straight and you have to go up a hill. I didn't know if in that period of time, if there were a lot of bicyclists, or if maybe there's more now. How those demographics—

06-00:42:26

Walker: There are more bicyclists now. The bicycle lanes were put in after I left the commission. I actually have not been in favor of many of the bike lanes. I think they're not used, and in destination areas—for example, in the South Campus, immediately around the campus—all of those streets should be two-way streets. The old goal of moving vehicles quickly through the area was wrong. We should view the whole area as a destination. Bikes should be commingled with the cars and the speed would be controlled because the bikes are all commingled with the cars. When you're in a destination area you should not try to speed up anybody. You're not trying to give anybody in a vehicle any easy way to get around. If they're not on foot, if they're on a bike or they're in a car they should be going slowly and be all mixed together. I still hope we might achieve that because there is some political interest now in changing some of that in the South Campus.

06-00:43:43

Farrell: You had written that this earned more public hearings and press than any other activity when you were on the commission. Can you tell me a little bit more about that, or perhaps a particularly memorable public hearing in relation to this?

06-00:43:57

Walker: Oh, there were so many public hearings. They're all a blur, there were so many of them. I remember one of the commissioners who was fed up with it—it had been accumulating, everything that anybody had ever said to her in every staff report in everything we had worked on—and she brought in a pile of paper about that big (indicates about 3 feet) and put it down on the podium and said, "This is just the correspondence that we've had about this one

issue.” I remember this graphic example of how much time and energy were involved in this and how passionately people felt about it. There were doctors that came to our hearings that said, “We’ll never be able to get to the hospital on time and the ambulances won’t get through.” There was huge anxiety that it would not work. On the other hand, we had the people who were living on these highly trafficked streets that were going to be changed who loved what we were doing, so it was a big balance. When I look back on it, it was remarkable that we actually did it.

06-00:45:18
Farrell:

Did you see a decrease in number of traffic incidents or perhaps accidents or deaths on those—like Fulton or Ellsworth—in response to the implementation of the diverts?

06-00:45:31
Walker:

That’s a good question, and I don’t know. If I did know at the time, I don’t remember. We certainly had a lot of happy people living in those neighborhoods who suddenly felt that their street belonged to them. I lived in a very small street in the Elmwood for twenty years, where kids could play in the street. When I built this house I didn’t build it until my children were all grown. I knew I was going to be moving to a busy street. We designed the house to accommodate that but I did not think through the fact that there’s no street life on a busy street so you only know your neighbors if you really work at it. There are not the casual encounters that you have in another neighborhood. I understand much more how different it is to live on an arterial street and one that has public transportation.

I moved here in part because it was a bus line, and at that time there was a direct bus line to San Francisco on Euclid Avenue—not just the current local service. It was very nice to have a bus stop half a block from my house even though I mostly walk everywhere and I always walked to campus. It is a different way of life and if you live on a quiet, protected street people do live on it differently. I’m very glad that I didn’t live here when I had kids because I think it would have been harder for them to have had the kind of happy experiences they had living on a very small street in the Elmwood. Everybody in our block knew each other so well that during the Vietnam War we designed a window poster saying “A Home for Peace.” We promulgated this throughout the country. We all marched together in anti-war marches in San Francisco and we closed our street for street fairs, 100 percent of the people on our block, from ninety-six to seven, signed petitions. There was street life there, and shared common values in that neighborhood. Giving that up was a big decision, to move away from that.

Having my children grown, my life was different and I was working and busy and so wasn’t able to participate in neighborhood life. But I look back very fondly. Although those were single-family houses they were on three thousand square foot lots so we were very close together and each block had a

lot of people. It was a great place for my kids to grow up. It was two blocks from College Avenue so they could ride on the bus. None of my children learned to drive until they were over twenty-one.

06-00:48:40

Farrell:

So speaking of public transportation, you've mentioned a few times that there was a system of public transportation that you had wanted to be implemented that never came to fruition. What would an ideal public transportation system in Berkeley have looked like to you, then, and perhaps even now?

06-00:48:58

Walker:

I do not remember how much we had actually worked on the specific designs of the system or whether it was working with AC Transit on the reality of trying to improve things. The first of which, was to have more frequent service on the bus routes that had very infrequent service. But I honestly do not remember the details of what we did at that time.

06-00:49:33

Farrell:

Then, my last question on this is how do you feel—we've touched on it a little bit, but I guess more specifically—like Berkeley has changed since those diverts have been installed?

06-00:49:50

Walker:

Well, as I've mentioned before we have a number of neighborhoods that now have such a small amount of traffic that kids can play in the streets or play safely on the sidewalks and there's much more community life in those neighborhoods. I do not think the arterials were as impacted as we feared they would be. They continued to function. We've had increases of traffic counts and some less good headway times with our buses but the traffic adjusted to the system. People probably didn't make a few trips. You had mentioned it was a system designed to keep people from coming to Berkeley. Well, I never thought about that and we certainly didn't think about it at the time. I don't know if that system kept people from coming to Berkeley. Presumably if you don't know Berkeley you would stick to the main streets anyway. The people who were cutting through the neighborhoods were people who either lived here or worked here, so they knew the community. It was those people we were trying to control. If you don't know Berkeley, you wouldn't be trying to meander through a neighborhood and run into a diverter unless you were going to visit someone and couldn't figure out how to get to their house, which I know it can be a problem.

But I assume that the main reason people stopped coming to Berkeley—if they did stop—is we had been so discouraging of any development and with the suburbanization of retailing our downtown died. Until Denny Abrams started retail on Fourth Street, nobody came here to shop. Telegraph Avenue was a major shopping area until the late '60s and early '70s, and that ceased to be a prime shopping area, except regionally for people who were buying books and music. Now those are no longer purchased very much in brick and

mortar stores. Berkeley ceased to be a regional retailing center a very long time ago and it's never going to be a major retailing center. You cannot be a major retailing center without some major anchor tenants and major anchor tenants need to be paid to come and they need much more space and more parking than we would ever provide. One of the things my work on the downtown plan, this last time was to create a dense residential neighborhood in our downtown because having a lot of people living downtown will generate enough demand so we will get new businesses that will serve those people and will then be attractive to the rest of the people in Berkeley. We will get a downtown back again. It will never be a retailing center downtown but it will be a place for the arts, for music, for performances, for small-scale retail, and for all the things that having a dense population living there will provide. So, sorry for the digression.

06-00:53:36

Farrell:

No. This is a good place to leave it here for today and then pick it up next time.

Interview 4: November 20, 2014

[Audio File 7]

07-00:00:00

Farrell:

Okay, this is Shanna Farrell with Dorothy Walker on Thursday, November 20, 2014 in Berkeley, California. This is interview number four, tape number seven. Dorothy, when we left off last time we were talking about your time on the Berkeley Planning Commission. One of the big issues that you dealt with was People's Park, which is a 2.8 acre plot of land that was allocated for development of student housing, parking, and administrative offices, and the demolition of the park began in 1968 but they ran out of money, so for a long time this has been a really hard piece of land to reconcile use of. Can you talk about how you got involved with People's Park and maybe your early introduction to the issues pertaining to it?

07-00:00:59

Walker:

Well first of all, just a little augmenting of your introduction. The area now known as People's Park was originally a fairly dense residential area of old, large, single-family houses that now were mostly rooming houses. They had been removed as part of an urban renewal project in the South Campus, which was part of the university's acquisition of land that happened in the 1950s and '60s. That was the last block of parcels that the university bought and removed all the houses but not built the proposed student housing. There was a lot of protest about the removal of all the houses on that land so it was already something of a controversial site. The university not only ran out of money—they ran out of demand, because in the '60s, there was a lot of questioning of authority. It was part of the Vietnam War era culture change; and students did not want to live in dormitories at that point. The university had trouble filling their existing dormitory space so the plan to build another high-rise housing project there was cancelled. They cannot build when there's no demand because housing has to pay for itself with rent. Student housing is not funded by the state. It's funded entirely by student rents. New housing is usually subsidized in part by rents from housing built at an earlier time.

So the land had been cleared but it was simply left vacant. As part of, again, the jousting with authority of that era, some local people and students decided that they wanted to make a park out of this land. It was to be a communal park and decisions were going to be made communally about how to use it. It was an interesting process that began; people would come and start working on a part of the land with some ideas they had and another group would be working somewhere else; there was not a unified plan for its development. Some interesting things happened—somebody wanted a lake and so they were digging a hole one day and other people thought it wasn't a good idea and they were filling it up the next day. It was a messy but interesting process that went on for some weeks.

The university let it go on for some time and when they realized that it had become a serious endeavor and couldn't be permitted, they made a secret plan and came in the middle of the night and put up a fence around it. Interestingly, the city and the university had a committee of staff members that met periodically to discuss issues of mutual concern. That committee met the day before the fence went up and it was never discussed. That shows how weak the ability of the university and the city was to communicate with each other. They simply didn't do it. After the fence went up there was an outraged response from student leaders and community people and there was a big rally held on Sproul Plaza. A student leader said, "Let's go down and take back the park." There was a big march down Telegraph Avenue and the fence was torn down and the students and the neighbors that had been involved in it occupied the park. The city and university police were not able to handle this. The National Guard was called in and there was an enormous confrontation in which one person died, one person was blinded, and hundreds of people were arrested, including Loni Hancock, now our state senator, who also was our mayor in later years.

A lot of people had a lot of history with People's Park. This was in 1969 and I was on the Planning Commission. The city and the university were at complete loggerheads at that point. We were occupied by the National Guard for two weeks. It was an unbelievable time. When you went to city hall for a meeting there were people in uniforms with guns standing all around city hall. I remember crying the first time I went to a meeting there. I couldn't believe this was my own city. So the Planning Commission—because we dealt with land use issues—thought that we ought to try to find a resolution for this to get off dead center because the university's position still was, "We are going to build housing on this land even though we may not do it right now. It's ours and we're not going to have a park there." I was not so much interested in the park concept, per se, as I was interested in finding a solution that got us off the confrontation that we were in.

I proposed to the commission that we recommend to the city council a proposal that would use part of the land for a park that the city would be willing to participate in control of and that the other half would be used for temporary parking lots which would serve the merchants. The merchants on Telegraph Avenue were suffering from all the turmoil and it would be a helpful thing at that point for them to have space. It was not a great solution and not a permanent solution but it was an attempt to have something that would get off point. The city council thought this was a good idea and I was delegated to make a proposal to the board of regents about this. I met with some of the university officials—Bud Cheit, a professor from the business school was the academic vice Chancellor. I met with Bill Coblentz who was a San Francisco Attorney and a liberal member of the Board of Regents. I met with several people before the Regents meeting who would be sympathetic to the need to get this resolved and who would not be looking at just a political

struggle but some problem that needed to be fixed. I met with them and told them what we were thinking about and they were supportive and helpful.

I had to go first to the Buildings and Grounds Committee of the Regents that makes decisions about land use. I made my presentation to the grounds and buildings committee and then they would make a recommendation to the Board of Regents. I do not think I spoke at the Regents meeting itself. I certainly spoke at the grounds and buildings committee, who recommended the City proposal to the full board. But at the Board of Regents meeting, the full board was there, including Ronald Reagan, who, as governor, was a member of the Board of Regents. He very seldom came, but there he was in full makeup. It was the first time I sat that close to someone in public life who was completely made up. The Board of Regents turned down completely any notion of any settlement with the city and they ordered the campus to proceed immediately with plans to build housing on the site. Reagan was really there, leading the pack, accommodating the city was not on his agenda in any way.

After the meeting was over, I was quite upset. As I was leaving the meeting Reagan was talking with Catherine Hearst who was a member of the Board of Regents at that time. I stopped and waited until they recognized I was standing there and I said to Reagan, "Let the blood of the people of Berkeley be on your hands." He looked at me, with a kind of half-smile, and said, "Fine, I'll wash it off with Boraxo." That was amazing. I guess he was pretty well known for being handy with a quick quip, but to make a quip about the product that had been the sponsor of his television program, Boraxo, was absolutely amazing. Being somewhat of a political animal myself, I knew somebody needed to know what just happened, so as I was walking out of the room, a reporter for KQED was standing there and I stopped and told him what had just happened. As soon as I got home I then called a couple other people in the media and told them what had happened. So, on the news that night my encounter with Reagan was reported on the NPR news and then Herb Caen picked up, our famous columnist in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. I was the lead article in one of his columns about my confrontation with Reagan. Even more interesting, Malvina Reynolds, a well-known folk singer locally and throughout the country, heard one of these stories and wrote a wonderful song called *Boraxo* and sent me a copy of it. She sings it on one of her recordings and the jacket reprints the Herb Caen column.

That was an amazing encounter. Not that it changed anything, but it elevated the conflict, at least in the public eye, about who some of the players were that were impacting this. This is a long story, but the university never went ahead with building the housing. Number one, there was too much opposition to it and secondly they still did not have demand for housing at that time. This became a matter of interest to me throughout the rest of my life because I have never thought that the way it was being used was serving the needs of students and all the people who live in that neighborhood. It became a hangout for homeless people. It became a place where drug deals happened. There were

never enough facilities of interest there to attract students or other people to use it. It wasn't really a park—it was a no man's land. It has gone back and forth from city management to university management over the years, but in my judgment an almost 3-acre site in the heart of the most densely populated part of Berkeley needs to be serving the people who live there and the people who live around it and not be left as a kind of symbol of the conflict between the city and the university. I tried, over the years, both in my work on the Planning Commission and my work as a planner for the university—including a number of different commissioned studies and work with the community—to try to come up with other plans for it. None of these have ever come to fruition even though some minor changes have been made from time to time.

Several times when we planners proposed to add a lot of recreation facilities there that would keep it as open space but would have volleyball courts and basketball courts and things that would attract students, the city would object to making any significant changes and the chancellors would back down or would agree to only add one—we had, at one point, one volleyball court or one basketball court. There was never any real understanding on the part of the administration that if you want to change something you have to have a critical mass of things to change it. Otherwise it doesn't work. Then people say, "Well, obviously, nobody wants to use this, so we should keep it the way it is because people aren't using it, even though we've introduced this volleyball court." It continues to be a problem as far as I'm concerned and a group that I've worked with in my retirement, the Berkeley Design Advocates, in the last couple of years did a major study of the whole South Campus area.

They did not politically step into the waters of a major proposal for change, but definitely talked about the fact that the mostly single-story buildings that front along Telegraph Avenue in that block should be replaced with taller buildings and that some of those buildings should extend in part into the park and should open into the park so that they would create more control over the space. I would probably go farther than that myself. I think at least half of that space needs to be used intensively and the other half should be left as a park, but it would be designed to relate to activities on the rest of the site to make sure a whole lot of people would want to be there. I was very disappointed when the new campus dining facility was built across the street, at Bowditch and Haste; they did not put that facility on People's Park. Or the new athletics facility that was built next to the stadium; if that had been built on People's Park, it would have had thousands of student athletes going there every day. That would have been transformative to the neighborhood. The fact that we still have the whole Telegraph neighborhood in major decline since the loss of books and records as the main economic mainstay of the street and the fact that we have a bleeding sore right next to Telegraph Avenue is a problem that needs to be solved. I think it's symbolic of the fact that the city and the university do not want to do anything that might create a problem. Because the student population is so transient there's no sustained student leadership to

change it, the neighbors who live around it don't want anything that creates another crisis and conflict that brings trouble like we've had before. The university doesn't really want to deal with the stress that will occur to change it. It's going to be very hard to change it and we need leadership on both the city and the university, together recognize this piece of land needs to serve more of a public purpose than it's doing right now.

07-00:17:29

Farrell:

I have a few follow-up questions. So you were talking about, at the beginning of that, referring to Bloody Thursday, which was May 15, 1969 when a group of protestors, I think three thousand people, showed up in Sproul Hall and eventually moved to People's Park. This is also the beginning of Ronald Reagan's public criticism of how administrators handled the issue. He is the one who sent the police officers and the California Highway Patrol there, which consequently led to the violence and overrode Chancellor Heyns' May 6 promise that nothing would happen without warning. Do you feel like you were already, being an administrator, working on this issue and knowing the back story with Reagan overriding the Chancellor's decision, leading up to the Boraxo song incident, do you feel like you were already a little aggravated by Reagan's handling of the situation leading up to that?

07-00:18:46

Walker:

Of course. I should have discussed that and I'm glad that you reminded me of some of the history that I've forgotten about. I wasn't an administrator at that point. I was simply an appointee volunteer as a Planning Commissioner for the city. We knew that Reagan was using this to his political advantage and that the city was basically a bit of a football in this. He didn't like the progressive politics of the City of Berkeley and he certainly didn't like the war protests that were going on here. A whole lot of agendas were involved at that time.

07-00:19:35

Farrell:

So on May 15, were you on campus or around campus?

07-00:19:39

Walker:

No.

07-00:19:41

Farrell:

What was that day like for you?

07-00:19:44

Walker:

I was not on campus that day and I was not working for the campus at that point. I do not recall what I was doing that day.

07-00:20:18

Farrell:

What was the reaction of the Planning Commission after that encounter with Reagan and the Boraxo comment?

07-00:20:28

Walker:

I don't recall. I suppose everybody was pleased that I'd made a public issue of it, but I don't recall what happened. I'm sure I got some pats on the back but I don't remember them.

07-00:20:46

Farrell:

As far as issues pertaining to the use of the park, you sort of touched on what your ideal would be for the way that that piece of land should be handled and some of the issues around why it's been such a touchy issue? What do you think it's going to take for the land use of that to change or what type of personality or character do you feel like needs to step into the role to force that change?

07-00:21:24

Walker:

Probably when some of the players who were involved in it in the '60s are no longer on the stage. Most of the political activists who were involved in the '60s are aging folks or are no longer around. There are still a few people, but not a number of them. The political people, including our mayor and our state senator, were deeply involved in this issue at that time even though Tom Bates, our mayor, in the past year or two has been very responsive to the Berkeley Design Advocates' plan to do major work in the South Campus. Whether he would really step in and take a leadership role to make significant changes in People's Park, I would question given his long history—even though he's become a pragmatic person in recent years as mayor. Loni has as well, but at one point, back in the '70s or '80s, Loni referred to People's Park as "Berkeley's Gettysburg." So those things are deeply emotional for people who participated in them and felt the deep commitment to the concept that was there even though it's never emerged as what their dream might have been.

The university has to be the one to step up to the plate, it seems to me. It's their property and there has to be someone who is willing to champion this and take the pain of the protests that will occur for significant changes to take place. A number of times in my career I recommended things for significant change there and those never happened because, in my judgment, there was not the will to do it or there was some underlying fear about the community reaction to it, that it was not worth the price and the pain from the members of the community who would resist change. I think the number of people who would resist change are a smaller group by far than they were so many years ago when this first was a problem. I think the relationship between the city and the university is more comfortable now than it used to be, although there was a lot of stress between the city and the university over the stadium and athletic facility project when a number of city people supported the tree-sitters who were sitting in the oak trees for so long that prevented that project from moving forward. I think that whole issue put a real damper on a good relationship between the chancellor and the mayor at that time.

07-00:24:57

Farrell:

Another issue that you worked on while you were on the Planning Commission was the Santa Fe Railroad. There were land use issues pertaining to the filled waterfront that belonged to the Santa Fe Railroad in West Berkeley. Can you tell me a little bit about the background of that issue and your involvement with the Santa Fe Railroad?

07-00:25:18

Walker:

That was one of the most important issues we dealt with at that time. Berkeley had been filling land at the waterfront for many years, using it as a place to put its garbage and compacting it. Over many years before my time there were all kinds of plans for how the land might be used as they were creating it. There was even an airport planned at one point. Very different ideas had emerged over the years, not the least of which was that this ought to be something that generated revenue for the city. When I was on the Planning Commission the owner of a major parcel of land there, the Santa Fe Railroad, proposed to build a major shopping center. That was on the central portion of the filled land. If you go down University Avenue out to the whole waterfront area, the whole enormous area to the right of that western end of University would have been a major shopping center. In the '60s, shopping centers close to freeways that had lots of parking was the model for retailing. Almost every small city was destroying its own downtown by permitting shopping centers to be built on their peripheries, which would take all the demand from the existing retail in their downtowns.

The major issue in Berkeley at that time was how should we be using our waterfront? I had served on a waterfront committee, so I was very interested in what we ought to be doing with the land and what kind of public serving uses should we have there. There was a lot of interest in having a lot of recreational uses there. It's an incredible site and a location that most people in Berkeley can get to. From my view, we could have a lot more density in Berkeley because on one side we have the whole regional park system and on the other side we have the bay and the waterfront. It makes it much easier to have a lot more people living in between all these major open space resources. Berkeley itself does not have a large number of big parks, but there was that opportunity there. So, the question was what do we do with this proposal for the shopping center? There was a lot of interest by all kinds of people about what to do, and the Planning Commission did agree to deny Santa Fe the right to build a shopping center there. Fundamentally, it was our hope that this would save our downtown as the retail center of Berkeley.

The regional pressures were such that that really didn't happen but we did save the waterfront from development. I was not completely happy with the plan that we now have, agreed upon only recently, which has locked up all of the main parcel as a nature preserve to be maintained as a wild area. In the environmental impact report public comment period, I raised some questions—this is not a wild area. This is all filled land. This used to be water.

We're not restoring the water and the notion that it's sacrosanct because it's been dirt for a few years is wrong. We had the wonderful opportunity to sculpt that land to create a grand Berkeley's Golden Gate Park at the waterfront, that would have truly had play fields and wonderful places that would have made this a very inviting place. The recreational uses that are there are now all around the edges but the main parcel, which we had saved from the shopping center, has no human use in it. I think that was a tragic mistake, but I was very much in the minority when that plan was being developed after I retired.

07-00:30:12
Farrell:

You mentioned that there were regional pressures as to why the commercial hub of Berkeley didn't just stay in downtown, can you expand upon that a little bit and explain what you mean by that?

07-00:30:28
Walker:

The shopping center phenomenon had long-term consequences in terms of the decisions of what major stores would do. Unless your city was a huge regional retail center with a dense local population and lots of transit access you could never get a major retailer to come to an old central city that didn't have acres of parking. If you want a Macy's or a Nordstrom to come to your community now, you pay them and you provide them an enormous amount of acreage and you provide them hundreds of parking places because they are what's called the anchor tenant, and they are the draw that permits all the smaller retailers to function around them. This is the shopping center model that you see. Walnut Creek did it very successfully because they had the land resources to take open land and create an outdoor shopping center that was not like an enclosed mall, such as you see in Richmond, as an example. The models are still the same. If you go to Walnut Creek, the acres of parking and the anchor tenants—the Macy's and the Nordstrom and so forth—are part of the model.

Berkeley did not have the land resources to attract a major retailer without being willing to do some significant changes in the land uses in the downtown. Without a major retailer the notion that you can attract and keep a lot of small retailers doesn't work. The retailing function in Berkeley migrated to our very successful Fourth Street, which Denny Abrams developed using a different shopping center model. By buying up all that property and controlling it, he makes decisions about every store that will be in that area, that each store will be unique and that there will be as little competition among the stores as possible so that the shopping experience is interesting. That is a really fine example of fine-scale retail. I served on the zoning appeals board with him in the '70s. He is an architect and he had this wonderful vision and understanding of the place of shopping in our culture, that it needed to be fine-grained on a small scale and that it needed to invite people to meet and be on the street. Fourth Street, in many ways, has replaced our downtown as the retailing that we can count on in Berkeley.

My recent work on the downtown plan for Berkeley was based on the assumption that we would never have a major retailing center in Berkeley, given the models for big retailing these days. But the retail in downtown Berkeley could be much better if we had a much denser population living in the downtown. The downtown plan, it has just been very strongly supported by the voters—74 percent of the voters turned down an initiative measure to try to stop the more intense development of downtown—this plan would have a lot more people living downtown in taller buildings and would create a community. The demand of the people who live there for retail would attract enough retail to make it attractive to people from other parts of town to come downtown. We would gradually have a new downtown. It would not ever be a big shopping center with a great big department store, but we would have a variety of different kinds of retail that would serve everybody in the community. But retail and shopping were only minor parts of the plan. There will be a much denser residential neighborhood within a downtown centered around our strengths, which are education, arts and culture. The arts district is flourishing. Berkeley City College is bursting at the seams. The plan invites the university to relocate its public serving uses, such as museums, into the downtown and that is already happening with the Berkeley Art Museum on Oxford and Center. The streets will be redesigned to be more beautiful and pedestrian friendly. That's our vision for downtown and I hope we get there while I'm still alive.

07-00:35:04

Farrell:

The issue between the Santa Fe Railroad and the City of Berkeley did eventually lead to a lawsuit, for which you were deposed. Can you tell me about your deposition?

07-00:35:17

Walker:

I remember that as a rather harrowing experience because it went on for many hours. It was a long time ago and I do not remember the details, but clearly they were looking for whatever they could find in those of us who made land use decisions that might be helpful to them legally, in trying to overturn the fact the city were not letting them go ahead. Clearly we prevailed and eventually the land was purchased and the Santa Fe Railroad no longer is the landowner there.

07-00:35:55

Farrell:

So, I guess around the same period of time, you were working with the American Society of Planning Officials, ASPO. Did your time on the Planning Commission and ASPO overlap?

07-00:36:11

Walker:

In 1972 or '73, Jack Kent, who was a professor of city and regional planning on the campus and who also a member of the city council—I'm not sure if he was still a member at that time but he certainly had been—asked me if I would be interested in serving on the board of directors of a national planning organization called the American Society of Planning Officials. This was an

organization that included professional planners, academics, and lay planners, planning commissioners, and people who made land use decisions. You had to run for election, and I agreed to have my name proposed for election. In 1973, I was elected to the board of the American Society of Planning Officials as one of the planning commissioners on their board.

07-00:37:23

Farrell:

Can you tell me a little bit more about your work and what your role was in working with ASPO?

07-00:37:32

Walker:

I didn't know what to expect when I arrived. It was great to meet people from all over the country who were on the board. There were some people from the San Francisco Bay Area. One of the other new board members at the time I was elected was Allan Jacobs, then the planning director for the City of San Francisco. The first thing I found out was that the American Society of Planning Officials and the American Institute of Planners, which was another national planning organization but an entirely a professional organization, were beginning to talk about whether they should merge. AIP was in serious financial trouble and had been for some time. ASPO was financially secure and had been very well managed and had a long-time executive director, Israel Stollman, who ran a tight ship. The two organizations had about a 40 percent membership overlap, but ASPO was the only one that had planning commissioners. Almost immediately on the board I realized this is the critical issue before the two organizations. The other things we were dealing with were research programs, publications, new communication methodologies and some of the classic issues managing a big national organization.

The board was not doing anything different than what most boards would deal with, although it was all of interest to me and perhaps most interesting was meeting planners from all over the country. The ASPO and AIP boards always had one meeting together. They scheduled their board meetings to be at each other's conferences. So everybody who was a member of the board would go to both the ASPO annual conference and to the AIP annual conference and then there would be two or three other board meetings in between. ASPO's headquarters were in Chicago, so our board meetings were in Chicago if we were not meeting at a conference. Planning conferences are wonderful because they move around to many different cities because a city is part of the conference—you're studying what that city is doing and what it's like. Very early in my tenure as a board member I was appointed to a committee to consider the possibility of merging the two planning organizations. The main impetus was the financial shakiness of the professional planning organization but the other issue of interest, and particularly of interest to me, was the misfit between the functions of the organizations. The professional organization had chapters, so they had a way for people to participate locally. The organization with the lay planners, ASPO, had no chapters so the only way to participate was to go to a national conference or to be on the board, which gave almost no

opportunity for participation by lay planners, planning commissioners. ASPO had a whole research function, but AIP had a lobbying effort. Those two functions seemed to belong together.

It made sense that a merged organization would have much greater clout in any lobbying in Washington for the interests of good planning and would solve the financial problems of AIP. What became clear early in the merger discussions was the fear on the part of those who were members of the professional organization that their professional identity would be weakened by being part of an organization that had lay planners in it. Figuring out a way to merge the organizations and keep some aspects that made them feel special was going to be critical.

07-00:42:35

Farrell:

Were there any significant national meetings that you had gone to during your time on the board?

07-00:42:42

Walker:

We met several times a year, so I was going to all of those meetings. The first meeting was a very interesting meeting. As a person who at that point had never had a significant job, I was now dealing with important issues with people who were nationally known in the planning field and I was just a planning commissioner. The most significant thing that comes to my mind is the fact that at the very first meeting I had to deal with a personal crisis. I think I've mentioned before, I had a difficult marriage with my husband, who was a rather needy and controlling person. After I had been gone for a couple of days at the first national conference he called me on the phone and said, "If you don't come home, I'm going to kill myself." I had to decide what I was going to do. It seemed to me that if I went home, I would never leave home again I could not have the independent life that I needed from my husband. I realized he was not able, at that point, to accept that I was an independent person.

I decided that I could not go home and I didn't go home. I did not call him. I simply did not go home. This had nothing to do with planning but it was a profound experience for me personally because I realized that I had to change my relationship with my husband in some way because this was not viable for me. That really led to later decisions in which I told my husband that either he would get a job and not just work for himself at home or I would get a job and I would be out of the house or I would leave him, but we would not continue the relationship where he worked at home and I was a housewife primarily and just did volunteer things that threatened him as little as possible. I look upon that decision not to go home as a really important decision because from that flowed a whole lot of other decisions that made me the person I became.

07-00:45:49

Farrell:

One of those decisions was to go back to college. So in 1974, you decided that you had wanted to get a graduate degree from Cal in city planning but hadn't

finished your bachelor's work, so you began at Antioch University in San Francisco. Can you tell me a little bit about Antioch and how you ended up obtaining your bachelor's?

07-00:46:13

Walker:

Antioch had a program designed for adults who had had a lot of life experiences but who had not finished their degrees. I have no way of knowing if anyone viewed this degree as having very much value, except it enabled you to say that you had a bachelor's degree. I felt it a rather worthwhile experience for me because in order to get a degree, I had to demonstrate a lot of the learning that I had achieved from all the volunteer work I had been doing. I did a lot of research on planning issues that I had been interested in and I organized a lot of materials that I had written about issues I had worked on for the Planning Commission and the research I had done related to those—transportation land use, political aspects.

An architect was the professor who worked with me and he reviewed the proposed things I would do and I created documentation for him. I did then get a bachelor's degree from Antioch College. I was able then to apply for graduate school because I had a bachelor's degree. It's always been slightly embarrassing to me that that's the way I got my bachelor's degree.

07-00:47:53

Farrell:

So, after you had completed your bachelor's degree from Antioch, you did apply to grad school at Cal, in city planning, which is now in their College of Environmental Design. I'm not sure if it was then?

07-00:48:02

Walker:

Yes, it was then.

07-00:48:05

Farrell:

But at this point, the City of Berkeley and Cal had a joint committee to address town and gown issues, so the relationship between the community and the university and you had applied for a job that didn't work out but you had called Vice Chancellor Robert Kerley. Can you tell me about that encounter with him, calling him and the subsequent job that he helped create for you?

07-00:48:32

Walker:

As part of this I am changing my home situation, I am creating a new life and applying for graduate school. But I also started looking for employment and the university and the city at that time were hiring someone to be the director of a joint program. Several people applied for the job and I applied. Bob Kerley, who was the Vice Chancellor for Administration, was on the interview committee. He had said some supportive things to me that surprised me as someone who'd never really had a job before. He said to me, "Well, you could do almost anything you want—why are you applying for this job?" Which left me a little taken aback. I had written a long résumé of all my volunteer activities, but I didn't get the job. Which was disappointing, but

because he had been very supportive in the interview I called up and made an appointment to see him. We had a very good meeting and he offered me a job as the director of a transportation and traffic project.

This was 1975, the height of the oil crisis internationally when there were lines at gas pumps for miles because of the shortage of gas. The Environmental Protection Agency that had just recently been formed had mandated all major institutions to reduce travel to and from the institutions. Because of all the work I had done containing traffic and cars in the City of Berkeley this was a perfect assignment for me. I accepted that I would do this and three weeks or a very short time after I accepted the job, I also was admitted to the graduate program in city planning. I had a big decision to make—how can I do both of these? As I still had children at home I did not think I could both go to graduate school and work. At age forty-five I decided work was more important so I declined to go to graduate school, reluctantly. I've always felt bad that I didn't have a higher degree, but I've been very lucky to have done the things I've done without having any credentials.

07-00:51:30

Farrell:

So chronologically, going back to your time with ASPO and the merger, you were elected president of ASPO in 1976, and you had just started the job at Cal. Can you talk a little bit about the election and how much time that took up, how you balanced or negotiated or managed your time?

07-00:52:01

Walker:

ASPO had a fantastic executive director, as I mentioned before, and there was not a whole lot the board president needed to do unless they really wanted to. Some board members, some presidents, loved to try to get their fingers into the administration of the organization. I neither felt that I had the expertise because I had not had a long career as a planner, but I also felt when you have a really good manager you don't interfere with what he's doing. You use the board as the place to bring any changes that you want in the organization; you don't personally step in and out of the actual running of the organization. My role was to chair the board meetings when we met, to make decisions about what the agenda would be for the board meetings, but the day to day management of the organization, I felt, was not my responsibility, and I think very appropriately so. It was not a big problem to balance that.

07-00:53:07

Farrell:

Then, can you talk about the actual, the final merger of API and ASPO into the American Planning Association?

07-00:53:19

Walker:

In addition to our board meetings, the subcommittees, the two committees of people from each of the boards that were assigned to work on merger issues, were also meeting. We were flying back and forth across the country for the committee meetings on the merger. I found it fascinating that a number of the people I worked with on these committees, who were longtime professionals

in the field, had a hard time bringing their political expertise in terms of managing change to this change issue. Their emotions and their history and their feelings were all involved and it was quite difficult and quite contentious. The AIP members from the professional organization were having a very difficult time dealing with what they viewed as a loss of status if they lost their organization.

I was almost an outsider to the process because I'd not been involved in these organizations over a long period of time. I had not been involved in any national planning committees. I was probably there with less emotion than any of the other members of the committee, which was helpful; I was just trying to get a solution that made sense. We finally had a proposal that included a rather complicated plan that would have a subset of the organization for the professional members, so that those planners would be certified by the National Planning Organization. If you are a certified planner, you get some initials after your name if you've received this certification. Our joint committee proposed this to the two boards to remove the final sticking point so the merger could be approved. The two boards were to meet together in Chicago, about thirty people, because each organization had about fifteen board members. This was the meeting for the two boards together to decide if they were going to accept this report and approve everything needed to merge.

It was very controversial with some people. The president of the other organization and I were taking turns chairing the meetings, and it was Connie's turn, the president of the other organization, it was her turn to chair the meeting. Interestingly, she was the first woman to be the president of AIP and I was only the second woman to be the president of ASPO. These organizations were very male-dominated. The profession was very male-dominated at that time. Connie was chairing the meeting and not doing a very good job. It was the end of a long day, people all had flights they were going to catch, we had about forty minutes to finish the work. It was clear to me that we were not going to complete it because she simply was not forcing the group to make the tough decisions they needed to make. I decided that this was unacceptable given the fact we had spent three years struggling and we were at the point of decision and it had already been agreed that if we couldn't decide we would stop trying because it had been going on for too long. So, I—in the middle of the meeting—asked her if she would let me chair the meeting and she said yes. I used my skills, which were quite good, as a chair to get those thirty people to decide what to do, using my method as a chair, which is to keep telling people what they've just said and how it relates to what else has been said, permitting only new points, forcing them to keep hearing from me what decisions are needed until they make a decision.

So those two boards agreed to merge. Then the organizations had a problem because normally, the presidents of the two organizations were elected in national elections. What were they going to do for a president when they didn't have a mechanism for that? The next board meeting was in New

Orleans at a conference that already had been planned. The joint boards met to decide who to elect as president and two people were nominated. I was nominated and a professor from the University of Iowa was nominated I do not know what the outcome of the election was in terms of numbers because it was never announced what it was. I was elected the first president of the new organization, I'm guessing almost unanimously, or they would have said what the vote was. I had no planning credentials, I had no experience, but I knew how to chair a good meeting. They knew that I had helped them come to a decision. I think I was elected because they needed someone who could chair a good meeting while they were going through the transition period of merging those organizations. That was a great matter of pride to me then, and continues to be, that I was a nobody, except that I had a skill that these organizations really needed and I was there at the right time.

07-00:59:49

Farrell: I'm going to change the tape.

[Audio File 8]

08-00:00:00

Farrell: Okay, this is Shanna Farrell back with Dorothy Walker on Thursday, November 20, 2014 in Berkeley, California. This is interview number four, tape number eight. So Dorothy, can you tell me a little bit more about the position that you took that you had worked out with Bob Kerley on the management analysis group? Who you were working under and what your role was?

08-00:00:36

Walker: Well, after Bob Kerley hired me, I was assigned to the Management Analysis Group under Associate Vice Chancellor Ted Chenoweth. At that point I think there were eleven analysts in that group. The university actually had the funds at that time to have eleven people whose jobs were to go into various units and departments within the university that had some major issue that needed resolving. It was a wonderful experience because I would meet periodically with Ted and the other analysts and we would talk about the particular things we were working on. We would also talk about the methodology for analyzing problems and how you would resolve them. That was very helpful to me because I learned a lot about how to approach issues and the phases and steps of analysis. It was useful to me, and I'm an organized thinker so I already had some pretty good ideas for my project but it was very, very helpful. It was good to hear what people were doing in other departments and I learned a lot about the university, which was also helpful to me.

The department I was working with was the Parking Office because we did not have at that time a transportation office. We simply had a parking office and that was the department I was trying to change. My assignment was to reduce the number of cars coming to campus. That gave me wide latitude about what I was going to do and I jumped into the work with "This is just

great.” I spent my first weeks doing an analysis of all of the existing rules and regulations for parking and how the whole system worked and any of the studies of how people travel to campus. They used to do an annual study of housing and transportation with a questionnaire that went out to everybody in the faculty and staff regarding where they lived and how they got to work. So we had a base of information and I drew up an elaborate work plan, which Ted approved, which included setting up an advisory committee because this was going to be a very political issue. Parking is an issue that is dear to the hearts of the faculty in particular and I was told soon after coming on board that when the faculty had thought about having a union some years before, the only issue they wanted to negotiate about was parking. So, it was clearly going to be political.

Within the first few weeks after I was hired, at one of my standing meetings with Ted Chenoweth, he said, “I have something I need to show you,” and he handed a letter to me marked confidential. It was from Rod Park, who was the Provost and also a professor of botany. The letter basically said, “Do you know who this dangerous woman is that you’ve just hired?” It went on to describe my, in his view, reputation as dangerous from the work I had done on the city in terms of the traffic diverter program, and clearly it had been inspired by another professor of botany who had been one of the major protestors at meetings that we had held about the diverter program. Ted said, “I think you need to know what you’re up against because Rod Park is a powerful member of the administration and of the faculty as well.” I didn’t ask Ted what to do but I called up Rod Park’s office and made an appointment to see him. When I walked in, I went up and introduced myself because we hadn’t met yet and said, “I’m Dorothy Walker and I think—” He said, “Ted must have given you that letter I sent him.” I said, “Yes,” and I said, “I think you need to meet me and know who I am.”

I explained to him what my job was and what I expected to do and the kind of input I wanted and so forth. We had a gracious conversation and I subsequently got along well with Rod. We had occasional run-ins after that—he was a strong-minded person and I was too. That was my introduction to the politics of the campus and made me know what I was up against in terms of people who would be opposed to any changes in the parking system, which I then encountered very quickly.

08-00:06:44
Farrell:

You had mentioned in the autobiographical piece that you had written that there were periods of time where people encouraged you to have a cooling off period with Park and that sometimes you felt that he felt that you overstepped, and you had mentioned that you did a little bit.

08-00:07:12
Walker:

That was a later incident. Later on, after I had completed the transportation project and Bob Kerley had given me another job, Coordinator of Physical

Planning, that was, again, a very political job. Bob felt that all of the players on campus that dealt with decisions about land use and planning were not communicating with each other and he wanted me to make that work better. This involved getting the Dean of the College of Environmental Design, key faculty members in Planning and Architecture, people who worked on Capital Projects, people in the planning office to meet together and discuss whatever projects were being proposed to be built on the campus. It was amazing that Bob gave me that assignment, but that's what I was doing. At that point the whole reorganization of biology was under major discussion and the new facilities that they would need were also under major discussion. Rod was the major player in all of this, as the administrator who was most interested in how the biological sciences would be reorganized and how the new facilities, both for teaching and research, would be built for it.

I do not remember the specifics of it, but I had written a report of a meeting of all of the different planners and designers and people involved in the projects. We had reviewed one of the proposals for biology—some critical comments had obviously been in this report—which I had circulated back to the members but I'd also circulated to members of the administration. Right after that happened, I'm sitting in my office. This is after Mike Heyman has become the Chancellor and Rod is the Executive Vice Chancellor. Mike comes into my office and says, "Rod Park is so mad at you for that report you circulated about one of the biology buildings just stay out of his way for at least three days." That was, again, one of my experiences. Okay, you have to learn how to step on toes and live with it and that was part of what my life in the university was like.

08-00:10:01
Farrell:

Can you talk a little bit more about what it was like to work with Ted Chenoweth and maybe a little bit about what you learned from him?

08-00:10:08
Walker:

Ted was a very disciplined, focused guy. The first thing I learned was that he gave you the fastest turnaround you could imagine on anything that you sent him. If you sent him a draft of a report you were working on that was fifty pages long he would get it back to you the next day. I do not know how he handled the workload because he was managing a lot of functions on the campus. He must have been working day and night. The thing I learned was giving your staff quick feedback on things they're doing makes them feel important, makes them feel that their work is important and also lets them get on with it. I tried as much as I could to follow his example of quick turnaround. He was also very disciplined about how you approached management tasks and the analysis tasks. So I learned a lot about that.

One thing dismayed me with Ted. At one of our meetings of all the analysts he was talking about how proud he was of everybody in the group and that everybody was so good and that no one in the group had ever failed. That

really scared me and I did not say it to him in front of the group, but at our next meeting I said, “Ted, it really scared me when you said nobody in our group has ever failed. If you’re doing something important almost always you’re going to fail—or sometimes you’re going to fail. The kind of work I’m doing is fraught. I mean, these are political things and it’s not even possible to define clearly what success or failure is on the kinds of things I’m working on. I’m very worried that you might just throw me over the cliff if I fail. I just want you to know that it really worries me that you think that people won’t fail. I have in the back of my mind that it’s possible that I can fail because the things I’m doing are not easy.”

08-00:12:46

Farrell:

In respect to that, Mike Heyman had instructed you to make things a little bit fuzzier because some of the issues that you were working on, you considered to be unsolvable or challenges, difficult to solve. But you felt that the only way that you could work effectively was to be clear, in order to gain trust. Can you talk a little bit about what your response to that was and if you had to strike a balance, how you did that?

08-00:13:19

Walker:

I probably wasn’t very good at striking a balance. Mike gave me, I thought, very good advice when he said, “You make things too clear; you’ve got to keep things fuzzy sometimes.” I think his intent was the need to finesse the issues more than I was doing. I found it almost impossible to not make things clear because I felt that all my work—I’m not sure these comments were made early on because he was already chancellor and I can’t remember what I was working on when that happened—dealing with controversial issues during most of my career involved working with members of all kinds of communities within and outside the university who would be seeing the issues from various points of view. For example, faculty and staff and students were impacted differently when I was working on changing parking and transportation. When I was working on student housing and where we should locate it and what the impact of new housing was going to be on student rents or dealing with tough land use issues, like where the biology buildings are going to go, none of these are really easy issues, there were many opinions about them and I thought people needed to understand the university’s position and the issues in particular. I felt it was my job to make everything really clear so people would understand the issues. I also felt I had to be trusted that I wasn’t playing games with people, that I wasn’t trying to obfuscate the realities of the situation whatever they might be. I probably was not very good at taking that advice. I think what Mike was also trying to say was that I needed to be more understanding about the fact that people’s responses were not necessarily rational to issues in which they had an emotional investment. That’s the advice. I think I tried to be more understanding about that, that our faculty members may have the world’s greatest intellects, but if you’re talking about giving their secretary a parking

privilege that will put her car next to his, and might affect his ability to find a place to park, their emotions are involved.

Mike's advice was good and perhaps tempered a little bit my being too rational about everything I was doing and my need to be more understanding about the feelings that were involved. I think his advice was really good because this is a fundamental flaw of who I am, it's always been hard for me not to be rational. Rationality says you leave the emotions out of it, you figure out the issues, and then you deal with it. His advice was, stop being so rational. I did the best I could but my need to be clear probably trumped his making things a little fuzzy.

08-00:17:11

Farrell:

I guess going back to your work as director of transportation and traffic, so this is a project that took almost two years. Can you talk about what some of your actual work on this project included?

08-00:17:28

Walker:

Number one, I did a major new survey of everybody on the campus—faculty, staff, and I don't know if I did students; certainly faculty and staff—in more detail about where everybody lived and how they traveled. I started working with the transit agencies about how we might improve public transportation to the campus. I decided we needed to set up a van pool program that we would manage where people would have shared rides to the campus. I developed plans to reward car poolers with the best parking. I looked at the pricing policies of parking. At that point the price to park on the central campus was \$7 a month. I started looking at where we might locate remote parking and run shuttle buses to the campus. It was very broad ranging and I was looking at every possible way that people might behave differently in terms of how they got to campus.

The most difficult was the fact that raising the price of parking was the first thing you had to do. When people have basically free parking there is no motivation to leave cars at home if you can park on the campus for \$7 a month. I also wanted to make people more aware of the price of parking, so I thought that in some of our external lots people should have to pay every day so they would be aware of what they were doing, and we had to have prices that were more costly than public transportation. Some of the very first meetings involved talking about the fact that the price of parking was going to go up. These were early in the project. I felt we had to start talking to people about it. I couldn't spend a lot of time writing a big report without beginning to bring the community along with what was going to happen.

The first meeting that was held with faculty representatives to talk about parking ended in an uproar. Ted had decided that he would chair the meeting and just introduce me, but everybody got up and started screaming and hollering that they didn't want any changes in the parking system, they loved

everything the way it was, and why was this happening to them? The students and staff could change the way that they behaved but the faculty should keep parking as it is, so go away and don't bother us, we've got better things, more important things, to think about than this. After that meeting, I told Ted that I thought he should let me handle the meetings in the future, that I would like to do that. I did handle all the meetings after that. One of the key things to getting anything done politically in a complex organization is to have an advisory committee of people who represent all the interests involved and have that committee work with you during your work and be the ones who make the recommendations at the end of the work, so the recommendations are not coming from you, the analyst who actually did the work, but that they come from a politically representative committee so that they have some real clout. A major part of my work was getting a good advisory committee set up and working with them on a continuing basis during the two years I worked on that project. A committee was set up and Bill Garrison, a professor of engineering who was the head of the Institute of Transportation Studies, was appointed chair of that committee. A number of other members of faculty, staff, and students, I think, equal number of representatives were appointed. I can't remember who all these people were representing the faculty, staff, and students, but all the different campus populations and consumers of parking were represented and I worked closely with that committee.

08-00:22:06

Farrell:

So, when you're writing the recommendations and you're working on that, towards the end, you found out that Bill Garrison had gone to the chancellor and asked him to kill the committee. Can you tell me about what your initial reaction was when you first heard about this?

08-00:22:26

Walker:

This was amazing because our committee was clearly going to endorse all the recommendations. I think there were 160 recommendations. The report was very extensive, but the critical recommendations were reallocation of parking so staff members who were willing to be in a van pool or a car pool could get preferential parking in the best parts of campus. If you were driving alone to campus you didn't get as good a place as people who were willing to drive together. That was the heart of some of the parking recommendations. This went directly up against the faculty's view that their parking places were sacrosanct and staff people shouldn't be parking on the central campus. When we're getting to the point where the committee is going to meet for its final approval of these recommendations I suddenly find that my committee has disappeared.

Bill never called me and never told me. He went to the chancellor and obviously said to the chancellor something like "I can't support what this committee is about to do, and I think you need to get rid of this committee." If I knew something more about it, I don't remember it now but Ted must have told me my committee had been killed, my sense is this was all a surprise to

me. I couldn't believe it was happening. Politically, I was left out to dry and what was going to happen with all of my work? So, I picked up the phone and called Al Bowker, the chancellor at that time; I called his secretary and made an appointment. When I arrived in his office, his executive assistant, Glen Grant, said, "Here is the intrepid Dorothy Walker." Okay, so he knows something I don't know. Obviously, he knew I was there because of what had happened with the committee. So, I sat down with Al, the chancellor, who was a very soft-spoken guy. Sat down and said, "Al, I was hired with a lot of publicity because the campus wanted everybody to know that they were doing this big project and you were really going to reduce the number of cars coming to campus and I was going to do this project. I've been working on it for two years. I've done all this work and I have all these recommendations, and now you've killed the committee. The committee was basically to make the recommendations. I don't know what you think should happen now, but it's not tolerable for me that all of my work is for naught, because of how I came to take this job and who I was in the community before I came here. I need you to adopt the key recommendations of this report, and you yourself announce that you are adopting the key recommendations, otherwise, I'm going to have to resign and make a big fuss." I must have enumerated what they were but I don't remember the details.

Al agreed that he would promulgate the key recommendations of my report and that I would go ahead and publish my report and circulate it. That's what happened, and I did not have to quit and make a fuss. There were so many recommendations, not all of them were adopted, but many of them were. The price of parking went up, the van pools and car pools got preferential parking. We started running van pools. We got a huge amount of that program operating.

08-00:27:06
Farrell:

Can you talk about your subsequent relationship with Chancellor Bowker after that?

08-00:27:13
Walker:

I don't know if sometime in that period I was asked to become a member of the chancellor's senior staff. I don't remember where it was in relation to that confrontation, but very early in my career in the university I became a member of the senior staff, which was huge because it gave me access to all the people in power at every staff meeting and was extraordinary. Whether it was related to that or later, I don't know, but it was before Mike Heyman became chancellor in 1980, so it was sometime between 1975 and 1980. Al Bowker, I think, respected me and liked me for what I had done because after he left the campus and went to the new Department of Education, whenever he would come back to Berkeley—or at least several times when he came to Berkeley—he would climb up to my office, which was then in the A&E building on the third floor, without an elevator, and spend a few minutes

chatting with me. I thought sometimes speaking truth to power is really good and you're respected for it.

08-00:28:38

Farrell:

Can you tell me a little bit about your appointment as senior staff to the chancellor, and how your roles morphed or adapted a little bit in that new—

08-00:28:52

Walker:

Well, being appointed, it's not an appointment—you're just asked to be a member.

08-00:28:57

Farrell:

Was it like a cabinet?

08-00:28:59

Walker:

Senior staff is like a cabinet: it's not a job; it's simply the chancellor wants people to meet with to advise him. These are his top administrators and I was probably the lowest on the totem pole of the people who were members at that time when I joined.

08-00:29:21

Farrell:

So, you were senior staff to Al Bowker, Mike Heyman, and Russ Ellis.

08-00:29:28

Walker:

No, Russ Ellis was never a chancellor. I was on the senior staff of Bowker, Heyman, and Chang-Lin Tien.

08-00:29:35

Farrell:

Oh, okay. Sorry, I mixed that up in my notes. Can you talk about the difference between the three chancellors that you worked with? Maybe their management style or your relationship to them?

08-00:29:53

Walker:

Al Bowker was a very soft-spoken, low-key manager. Just how the different chancellors sat in the room was of interest. 200 California Hall is where senior staff always met. If you haven't been there, it's a very large room next to the chancellor's personal office and has a table that seats twenty, twenty-four people and then it has seats around the sides for spillover people and guests. It has a door that goes directly into the chancellor's private office. Al Bowker always sat at the end of the table next to the door to his office and spoke so softly that if you weren't sitting near his end of the table it was extremely hard to hear him. He was low-key about everything. I can remember working with him on a really dicey issue when the campus was planning to put a lot of offices for athletics into the stadium, which had never been seismically strengthened, and the fault runs right through the stadium.

I and a number of others were very concerned about the fact that we were proposing to use the stadium daily, instead of just using the stadium a few times a year for games. We were already dealing with a problem of what to do when seventy-six thousand people are in the stadium when there's an

earthquake and we know that the western side of the stadium is slowly going to collapse in any major earthquake. The eastern side is built on the ground, so if you're sitting on the western side, which is where all the VIPs sit, you're in not a very good place. Adding work space on the west side, which means people would be there forty hours a week, all the time, was a major issue. It had been decided this was going to happen and we were going ahead. I had to do some prep work with Al Bowker before this was going to go to The Regents for approval. I cannot remember exactly what happened, but when somebody asked him about the fault Al just mumbled something, enough so that the Regents went ahead and acted anyway because people were used to Al mumbling and not making things very clear that he sort of muffed over the concerns that somebody had and the project went through. I had some personal anxiety about the fact that happened. I haven't liked the current stadium project, but I think the strengthening of it was great, that they finally have done that and spent all that money to do it.

Mike Heyman became chancellor, he was the direct opposite from Al Bowker. He sat in the middle of the table with his back to the main entry doors, so it felt much more participatory because he was in the middle. He had a very wonderful, loud, booming voice and everybody could hear him. They could probably hear him in the hall if he was making a significant point. He would start out talking about his views about the issues very strongly, where Al Bowker would just simply mention what something of interest was, and if people had any comments, but he did not make a major pitch about anything. Mike normally would start out saying, "Well, this is the issue and this is what I think about it, and I now want to know what you want to think about it." Mike genuinely wanted to hear what people thought about it, but my perception was that most of the people, but particularly men, don't really challenge the alpha male. If he has already said what he thinks it was extremely hard for other people around the table to challenge him. I never had a problem with challenging anybody. Unfortunately, it's something deeply engrained in me, I guess. If there was something I felt I wanted to say, I always said it, because it seemed to me he wanted the comments, and it was what we were there for. We were there to advise him. So, I always spoke my mind.

When Chang-Lin became chancellor, a completely different style, again. He sat at the other end of the table and basically he didn't really want the discussion. He would tell us what the issues were and he would ask for different reports. Of course the meeting was also a way of people reporting on various things they were doing, but in terms of feedback, there was really almost no opportunity for feedback. He didn't want it. He would describe what the issues were and what he was planning to do. So, those meetings had much less content because there was really not a discussion of issues. So, very, very different styles, and really interesting.

08-00:36:05

Farrell:

How did your own personal work philosophy develop while you were a senior staff?

08-00:36:20

Walker:

That's a good question, and I'm not sure how I developed my work style. I'd have to do a little introspection about that now. As I've mentioned before, what I learned from Ted, in terms of how to work with my staff as I gradually had people who worked for me, is that giving really good feedback and giving it as quickly as you can is important. The years that I reported directly to Bob Kerley and the time I reported directly to Ted Chenoweth were probably the formative years in learning a lot from them how I should behave when I then became a manager and had a lot of people working for me. That was that you really give quality time to your staff. Your standing meetings are for them to talk about everything that they're doing, to find out how they're doing, to be supportive of them, to correct their course. Both Ted and Bob Kerley were very good at how they used their one-on-one standing meetings. I think that became very important part of it.

In terms of all the work I did that involved the community or public meetings, we'll probably talk about this later on, but when I did things like working on the campus long range development plan I went to more than a hundred public meetings to present the plan to people, lots of whom don't like anything that changes anything, and the university was the biggest change agent in town. A lot of that, I had learned already in the Planning Commission, and I learned it more. I learned it in the transportation and traffic project, where I had a lot of controversial meetings. Over time, I think I developed a persona for these meetings that as much as possible separated my own feelings from what my role was, so that I was able to deal with very controversial things without having it get to me in a personal sense. I know at one point, Mike Heyman said to me, "I don't know how you do what you do. I couldn't do what you do." He didn't like to deal with conflict. He didn't want people hollering at him and most people probably don't want it.

I developed this persona. I could take a kind of pride in being able to deal with it and walk away from it without feeling I had been personally attacked. Even though the attacks were often personal I was able to depersonalize it. There were two aspects of my work over time. One was, how do you be a good manager, and one is, how do you deal with conflicts and with public conflicts?

08-00:39:43

Farrell:

You had also written, as a planner dealing with complex issues with political aspects, you knew that there were no right answers, only workable answers.

08-00:39:55

Walker:

That was one of the things I felt because in planning there isn't a right answer, it's not like engineering. When Tien was the chancellor, I felt he was always expecting the right answer because that's what engineers do. I've thought it's

much better to have somebody from the humanities or somebody who deals with the unknowable and the undefinable. Not only is there no right answer; what are your standards of success? So when I was working I decided that I have to decide what my own standards of success are, and I can't have them imposed on me by somebody else. It may be that they'll think that I've not succeeded, or maybe I haven't succeeded in the conventional way of thinking about it, but I have to decide what my standards of success are. Otherwise you can't work in a field where you don't know what the right answer is, where it's negotiation, where it's give and take, it's deciding what's politically the most useful thing that you can do without giving up the fundamental principles of what you're trying to achieve. That's a big balancing act.

08-00:41:34
Farrell:

Did you ever experience any tension or setbacks or any challenges because you're a woman and this was a male-dominated field?

08-00:41:57
Walker:

One of the main things that occurred throughout my career at the university was the fact that I didn't have a social life with the predominantly men that I worked with. My husband worked for himself, so he didn't have contacts and a social life that revolved around his work. Because I was one of the few women working at the top levels of the administration, I was not included in any after-work things that the guys would do. For example, when Dan Boggan was the Vice Chancellor, a lot of the men administrators liked to go off and play basketball together, they liked to go out for a beer after work, and you would hear about all these informal ways that people met and bonded. I was never part of that. I have to assume it was because I was a woman. I also felt at that time it was the first awareness of the institution about sexual harassment and other things. I think that men didn't really know quite how they were supposed to treat women colleagues.

Perhaps I was almost the victim of sexual harassment anxieties. It wouldn't have been sexual harassment on my part if somebody invited me out to a beer, but maybe there was anxiety that it would be perceived that way. I felt that there was a network of relationships outside of work that many of the other administrators had that I was not part of. It may be that I was not a warm and fuzzy person and that I also tended to be a little bit of an outlier in terms of being more outspoken than a lot of the other people were, so maybe people were a little afraid of me or they just didn't see any win in having me be part of their—I don't know. I felt that I missed some of the bonding that men had that I never was part of.

08-00:44:32
Farrell:

So, you worked as assistant to the vice chancellor, Bob Kerley, from 1978 to 1980. Can you talk about how you moved into that role from being director of transportation and traffic?

08-00:44:49

Walker:

I guess when I finished that project the university decided they wanted to keep me around. So, Bob Kerley worked with me to devise what should we do next? The Schools for the Deaf and Blind occupied a fifty-acre site south of the campus were very historic institutions that had been in Berkeley since before the university, very deeply embedded in the Berkeley community. The state was closing the facility here and building a new facility down in Fremont and this property was going to become available. The university, as a state agency, had a right to ask for this property. That was a major project Bob asked me to undertake—to determine how we might use the fifty-acre property and to undertake the acquisition of it. That was a wonderful and huge project that he gave me that basically took from 1978 to 1982. I worked on other things and other projects off and on, but the major project that I worked on was the acquisition of that fifty-acre parcel.

08-00:46:33

Farrell:

Can you tell me a little bit more about what went into that acquisition?

08-00:46:36

Walker:

First of all, members of the community could not believe that the university hadn't connived with the state to move the schools away. That was a huge thing—the big issue there. It was very hard for people to understand that the population of the two schools had changed over time; when they were first established, they were residential schools for children who could not learn in the regular public schools. By the 1970s and '80s we were mainstreaming as many children as possible rather than having them live in isolated environments. Children who needed to be in a special school generally had multiple handicaps. They were not just either deaf or blind. The schools' site has a lot of changes in level in it. The buildings on the site almost all had a lot of changes of level, so they didn't meet any disabled access requirements at all. A lot of the buildings were seismically unsafe.

There were a lot of other reasons why they moved the schools away, including the fact that they had a more humane view of how small children living in an institution ought to live. Rather than living in big dormitory rooms—first time I was there, I cried when I saw the way those little children had been living—the new school was small residential buildings where a small group of children lived in a home-like environment. But the Berkeley community wasn't interested in that—they don't want the schools to move away, the university must have been involved in making that happen, the university already has too much land, the university promised it would never go south of Dwight Way and we just shouldn't have the university here. So we knew we had a big political problem to deal with. Quite early on, the city of Berkeley went to the state and said, “We do not want you to give this property to the university unless we agree,” and the state agreed that they would not give it to us until the city agreed. We knew we had our work cut out for us from the beginning.

08-00:49:21

Farrell:

What was it like, starting that dialogue with the community?

08-00:49:25

Walker:

I decided that we needed to approach this problem in a unique way because the university itself did not actually know how it wanted to use the land, which is different from most acquisitions. Usually, when the university wants to acquire a piece of land, it knows what it wants to do with it. I said, “Okay, we have the requirement under the California Environmental Quality Act that we do an environmental impact report, so let’s do something unique. Instead of deciding what we want and then doing an environmental impact report, let’s use the environmental process to help us decide what to do. Because the environmental review process requires community participation, we will be involving the community in helping us decide what to do with it. That will help us get people involved and supportive of whatever is decided.” So, that’s the way we approached this and it was a very successful approach. It was really good for the university, too, to help us decide what to do.

We identified three different kinds of uses for the site and I drew up—this was a little Machiavellian on my part—a whole list of premises for how we would use the site. The first one was that we would reuse the existing buildings. I felt that if we said we’re reusing the existing buildings as much as possible we have immediately eliminated the protest, “Oh, you’re just going to come in and clear off all these old buildings.” Now, these buildings were not historic in the sense that they were not from 1860. The schools for the deaf and blind had actually been rebuilt three times and the buildings that are there now were built mostly in the 1920s and ’30s, so they were the third generation of buildings. But they were still old buildings to most people living around there. That was one of the premises and there were several others that I listed and I put in some important things that would, I hope, reduce resistance and that we would use to help us decide how these buildings might be reused and how the site might be used.

We had three different approaches for the use. One was to move the office of the president up there because at that time they occupied University Hall at Oxford and University Avenue, now occupied by the campus. The office of the president is now in downtown Oakland but at that time, they were sitting there right across from the campus and occupying a seven-story building that the campus could use, which it now is able to use. That was the first thought. They would be one of the possible uses and that would relieve need for space for the campus here. The second one was a mix of different kinds of uses, administrative and research uses. All of the uses involved keeping some of the existing recreation facilities there for recreational use that would be shared with the community. The third one was to use it for student housing. We did the environmental analysis of the impacts of all of these different uses and moving campus childcare to the site was in one or two of the proposals. That

got eliminated during all the negotiations because that generated a lot of traffic because of people bringing kids to daycare and dropping them off.

Through the environmental review process I went door to door to everybody in the neighborhood that lived around the site. We had many, many public meetings. I can't even remember how many meetings I had with the Planning Commission and the city council on this because the state had said the city has to agree as part of the deal. The city then decided they would try to figure out a plan to use it themselves so that they could keep us from having it. They were sort of stuck with my premise of re-using the existing buildings. I knew those buildings would cost more to rehab than it would to tear them down and start over, so the city came up against the fact that they could not afford to acquire it when they were thinking of low-income and affordable housing on the site. They really couldn't afford to keep the existing buildings and all the neighbors were already interested in keeping the existing building.

In the negotiations, the city still wanted some affordable housing there. One of the things we agreed to do was give them one of the nice buildings along Derby Street and a plot of land behind for a project for low-income elderly. We did that, and also there would be shared community use of the running track and the gym and all of the recreation facilities and we would use the site for student housing and the site would really have a pretty low density of housing using the existing buildings. The planner in me was thinking, university is forever, we're planning this site for now, fifty acres, 1,200 students is nothing. That's like, the density of a single-family neighborhood. So I was, again, Machiavellian here. This is for the long-term, we're going to add a lot more density to this site, but we're not going to do it right away. We don't need it right away. We will have a new student neighborhood started here and we will add over time to it and it will be a wonderful asset for a lot of students to live there. But, as part of the final negotiations, the neighbors wanted to cement in place the fact that we were only going to have 1,200 people on this site. One of the lawyers who was part of the negotiating team in the neighborhood met with Chancellor Heyman as we were down to the final negotiations. They decided together that the chancellor would give the neighborhood a fifty-year covenant that we would never change the use of the site.

When I found out that the chancellor was about to do that, I was very upset because I knew this was much too low a density for us over time. In fact, the maintenance cost of the landscape and all the public facilities with only 1,200 people just didn't make sense to me. I went to the chancellor and I said, "Mike, give these covenants to the city if you want because the city always has an interest in our using our land efficiently, and over time, you can get them to agree to change the covenants. But you will never get the neighbors to change the covenant—they never want to change anything. They're not going to want to add any density. These neighbors are never going to be willing to adjust this covenant," which basically locked in place only 1200 occupants.

Mike said no, he thought it would be fine. So, the neighbors were given a fifty-year control over the density on that site. One of my major disappointments, but the neighbors then withdrew their opposition. The city knew they could not do a project. We had given them the site for the low income housing. Sandy Hirschen, a wonderful professor of architecture, designed a beautiful elderly housing project and tied it in to this existing building, so the campus was very harmonious overall. It's quite a wonderful spot but it needs a lot more people there.

The city finally signed off and we sent their sign-off to the state. Then the funniest thing happened: I got a letter in the mail addressed to me and it had no stamp on it, so I don't even know how it managed to get to me, but it was a letter from the State of California, sending the deed to the site to me personally, which was completely baffling because normally it would have gone to the office of the president, to the real estate people there. It was a funny end of this thing, that I personally received the deed to the site, which of course, I immediately passed on. It was quite a wonderful project and I think the students who live there are very privileged and very happy, but I wish there were more of them there.

08-00:59:00

Farrell:

Yeah, and as a result, Bob Kerley sent you three dozen roses?

08-00:59:04

Walker:

Yeah, [laughter] he sent me three dozen red roses the morning after the city had signed off on it. It was very sweet.

08-00:59:13

Farrell:

Well, I think that's a good place to leave it for today and we'll pick back up next time.

Interview 5: December 5, 2014

[Audio File 9]

09-00:00:05

Farrell: Okay, this is Shanna Farrell with Dorothy Walker on Thursday, December 4, 2014. This is interview number five, tape number nine and we're in Berkeley, California. Dorothy, last time we talked we left off on speaking about the Clark Kerr acquisition—UC Berkeley's acquisition of Clark Kerr Campus. There was another component to that project that we didn't cover, about low-income housing on the site. Can you explain what that project involved and maybe the outcome of it?

09-00:00:40

Walker: Yes. Well, part of the long negotiations with the city in order to get an agreement that the state would accept so the site would be turned over to the university involved their interest in using a portion of the site for low-income housing. They started working with David Madway, an attorney with the Housing Law project, brought in a low-income housing developer and hired Sandy Hirschen, a professor of architecture who designed this wonderful building. We talked about this two weeks ago. I remember talking about Sandy Hirschen.

09-00:01:44

Farrell: Yes, you're right.

09-00:01:49

Walker: So, we probably finished everything about the Kerr campus. When I started talking about Sandy, I realized I'd talked about him. I can add an amusing coda to this, however. At the completion of the Redwood Gardens low-income housing development there was a ribbon cutting ceremony and David Madway was the main speaker thanking everyone who had helped make the project successful. When he thanked me, he added, "Thank God she was with us because God forbid if she had been against us."

09-00:01:58

Farrell: We can edit that out. What we didn't cover was your work with Betty Deakin on the transportation plans and the transportation store on campus.

09-00:02:12

Walker: When the transportation and traffic project was completed, I did not stop working on transportation policy for the campus. In fact I continued to work on transportation policy my entire career on the campus. One of the things that we were working on was to have people be able to easily buy bus tickets, buy BART tickets, and BART had only been in Berkeley for a few years at that time. We decided that we wanted to have a commute store that would not only sell all kinds of transit tickets but would give all kinds of information on different methods of getting around without using your car, would promote bicycling, and so forth. Betty Deakin, who was a young assistant professor at

that time in the Institute of Transportation Studies, as well as the city Planning Department, was very interested in this. We started working together to write a grant to get enough money to establish a store.

We worked with the city, that had a parking garage—the parking garage is still there—on Center Street. We said, “If we can find the funds, would you be willing to work collaboratively with us and we would open a commute store in the front of the garage?” In the commercial space that’s now in the front of that garage. We got a \$200,000 grant and the city agreed and we remodeled the front portion of that garage and created the commute store. That’s no longer there. People can buy tickets in all kinds of different ways now but that operated for about twenty years and was one of the first in the nation that made it easy for people to learn how to get around without driving their cars. I continued to work with Betty off and on over the years on various transportation issues but that was just part of the beginning of continuing work on transportation. I now had management responsibility for that and had staff who worked for me who were operating that store.

09-00:04:52

Farrell:

So, after the period of time that you were working as an assistant to Vice Chancellor Bob Kerley, you transitioned to the Coordinator of Physical Planning position. I believe that one of your first assignments from Bob Kerley was to coordinate the review of building proposals? Can you tell me a little bit about the transition from working as Bob Kerley’s assistant to a coordinator of physical planning?

09-00:05:24

Walker:

[Added during editing: Not the right dates. This was much earlier and I think may have overlapped with the Schools for the Deaf and Blind project.] To me these were all sort of seamless transitions in the sense that I not only worked on whatever I was assigned to do, if I found something that needed doing I would say this is something that needs to be worked on and I would like to work on it. That was my *modus operandi* for most of my years on campus and I can’t say that there was a transition. Probably the transition was felt more by other people on the campus because I did not have much status on the campus to be given this coordinating assignment, but because I was the coordinator I was working with the people who were making the major decisions about new development on the campus. That included new academic buildings, new administrative buildings, and so forth.

A committee was established and I served as staff to that committee, so I was not supposedly running the committee. But as staff I really was running the committee. I think it was good—we had a lot more dialogue. The dean of the College of Environmental Design was on the committee. A number of professors and any of the departments that were working on major projects would participate in that committee. I was involved in a number of other things at the same time, and was increasingly working with people in the

planning office on many issues. We were beginning the implementation of the restoration of the former Schools for the Deaf and Blind as the Clark Kerr Campus so I was deeply involved in the committee that was working on how the old buildings would be restored on that campus. That was partly related to my coordinating work as well.

09-00:07:43

Farrell:

One of the things that you had to address was that the campus had problems making good decisions about new buildings because different people and departments had competing agendas. Can you tell me a little bit more about what some of those agendas were and how they affected your work or the negotiations that you had to see through?

09-00:08:02

Walker:

It's probably still a problem. It's really the nature of the dispersed governance of the university. Overall, that's probably a good thing but in terms of getting a building project underway, when you have a lot of different people making decisions it's hard to make good decisions and hard to make them in a timely fashion. People in the administration and people in the academic departments had to talk to each other. One of the reasons Bob Kerley had wanted me to do this coordination was to make sure that more conversations were taking place to make things a little more effective. I'm not sure that we changed it very much. In my judgment, the campus probably still has that problem because of the nature of the complicated decision making process on the campus.

09-00:09:06

Farrell:

I think one of the plans that there were some issues around was the plans for the biology buildings, which caught the attention of Rod Park?

09-00:09:20

Walker:

This was a major study. In the early 1980s, there was a massive, years-long study of how should the biological sciences be organized. That was a very important and worthwhile undertaking because we had various buildings that were used for biological sciences, but the way in which the biological sciences were evolving in terms of research and teaching required rethinking how biologists should be working together. Rod Park, the Executive Vice Chancellor, was a biologist and he was spearheading this and it was hugely important work. The project also involved making plans for new buildings for biology, and the coordinating committee's job was to look at plans for new buildings.

There was one point where the committee had reviewed a building proposal—I do not even remember what the building proposal was at this point. All I remember is I had circulated just the minutes of the meeting and I had circulated it to all of the administrators involved. The chancellor, Mike Heyman, appeared in my office and said, “Rod Park is really angry with you about the minutes of the meeting that you distributed recently, so just keep out of his way for a few days.” I do not remember what happened after that. Of

course that was a little bit of kill the messenger in the sense that I was not taking a personal position on this, I was simply articulating views of various people on the committee. Whatever that was about, we ended up with some wonderful new buildings for biology. The life sciences, building addition built to the west of the old life sciences, building was a major research facility and then the new buildings that are on the north side of campus are very wonderful new facilities that completely changed the way that the biologists were able to work together on campus. It was a very important project.

09-00:11:50

Farrell:

Your time as the coordinator for physical planning in the work that you were doing with building review and the committee was a gateway to student housing issues?

09-00:12:02

Walker:

Yes. I can't remember how this happened—I was working on new housing as one possible use of the Schools for the Deaf and Blind property and I know that I was interested in the fact that the campus had completely stopped building any student housing and we were beginning to have more student demand than we had supply. During the 1960s and 1970s, at the time of the Vietnam War crisis when there was a lot of rebellion against authority, campus dormitories had lots of vacancies because students did not want to live in institutional quarters. This was painful for the university because student housing has to pay for itself—the state does not provide any funds—and the student rents have to cover the cost of housing, so when there was vacancy in housing the whole housing system was in a very serious financial situation.

The campus had basically gotten out of the mode of thinking about building housing. Some years had gone by and it was clear we now had increased demand for housing. Housing was tighter in the community. A committee was appointed to study the housing issue and I was staff to that committee and wrote a major report called *Housing Policies for the 1980s* that outlined all of the existing housing resources on the campus, identified the need we had, included a financial analysis of how we might pay for housing and identified some potential sites for building housing. I believe that was a very important paper because it did spur the administration to begin working on new housing development, which I continued to be involved in for the rest of my time there.

09-00:14:08

Farrell:

What were some of the new locations of the student housing? Where were they and maybe how did they affect conceptually planning the layout and structure of campus?

09-00:14:22

Walker:

The first thing we look at is land that we already own and that's always an important thing to do. The campus owned a small amount of land on the north side of campus above Hearst and Gayley Road, and there was a parking lot

there and some vacant lots. There was an old fraternity house and some other land that the university didn't own. That was one of the sites that we identified and identified the fact that acquiring the rest of the property on the block would be an important part of developing that for housing. We also looked at adding more housing to Stern Hall, one of the original university dormitories, which had already been added on to once before but could be added on to again. Those were two sites near each other on the north and east sides of campus.

We also looked at the replacement of much of the housing at Albany Village, which was temporary, old, World War II wartime housing in extremely bad condition. That was a very important project and I worked on that off and on in various ways at various times. The resistance by the residents to having any increase in their rents, which would be required in order to finance either the complete rehabilitation or replacement of that housing, was such that Vice Chancellor Kerley was not willing to take on the politics of negotiating with the students. There were threats of rent strikes and so forth. I worked on that off and on but the replacement of the housing did not happen until after I had retired from the university.

09-00:16:30

Farrell:

We're jumping forward a little bit, but was this when you were working with students? Did you assign a student to help work on this?

09-00:16:43

Walker:

I was asked to teach a graduate studio in city planning on a planning topic during that same period. I decided that the topic should be the re-planning of the whole ninety acres at Albany Village. That was an enormous undertaking and looking back on it, it reflected my inexperience in being a teacher. I had all the good ideas but I probably should have picked a project that did not have such an enormous scope. It gave the students lots of things to chew on but it also had too many components to it and was really quite a huge undertaking. I had a lot of very good students and then I had a couple of not-so-good students in the studio. I think there were ten or twelve students, one of whom, Michael Caplan, works for the City of Berkeley. He's now the head of economic development for the city, so I have fond memories of Michael being one of the good people in that class.

I had a lot of fun planning the class and assigning the class and helping them understand how to design a planning project from the get-go. The students were assigned different parts of the project but a couple of the key players either failed to complete their assignments or had such far-out ideas that it was very hard to deal with. One of the interesting students in that class was an architecture student who still occasionally appears in the press because of the really strange and unusual buildings that he has designed and built from time to time. As he was the only architecture student in the studio, he was assigned to do the design aspects of the rebuilding of the campus; he had such far-out

ideas they were really hard for anyone to get their arms around. It was a very good learning experience for me and I think most of the students felt it was a worthwhile experience. That was a very enjoyable part of my work life at that time. I liked working with students whenever committees, such as the student housing committee, would have student members.

That was always a pleasure and because I worked on a lot of controversial projects I tended to speak to students either from the *Daily Cal*, or students who had been assigned a project in public policy or in planning who wanted some interesting project to work on. I often would have students in my office wanting to know about a project I was working on. Or, if it was something controversial, I would have someone from the *Daily Cal* trying to catch me in some statement that would give them something fun to print in the paper. I enjoyed very much working with the students in the press and felt it was part of my job to help them be good reporters.

A lot of other university administrators didn't want to talk to them anymore if they felt someone from the *Daily Cal* had really burned them in the paper. I felt it was my job to help them do better so if they wrote something that misquoted me terribly or misrepresented what I had said I would call them up and ask them to come in and sit down and explain to them what I thought they should have done. I never cut off access and I think I was treated better, in the press because student reporters felt that I wanted to collaborate with them, that it was not an adversarial relationship. I got a lot of pleasure out of working with students.

09-00:21:11

Farrell:

What were some of the ideas or concepts that you came up with, or that some of your students came up with, that were later integrated into the final plans for the Albany Village?

09-00:21:22

Walker:

From the studio?

09-00:21:23

Farrell:

Yeah.

09-00:21:26

Walker:

Well, nothing that came out of that class that I know of survived in what actually happened on the ground there. So much time had expired between the time I worked in that studio and the time that the project actually went forward and I was not involved at all. If there was something, some element that's left, I do not know about it. We did look at using a portion of the site for commercial use along San Pablo and that continued to stay in the plan. So, in that sense some things survived but it may be they survived because they were good ideas, not because someone was going back and looking at old plans.

09-00:22:12

Farrell:

So, moving back to when you were the Coordinator of Physical Planning there, you had written a report that you had mentioned on the layout of campus. You had written, “It’s taken a long time and the report is forgotten, but the action by both the campus and the city continue to reflect many of the principles and proposals in that study, including a new Berkeley Art Museum now under construction.”

09-00:22:42

Walker:

Oh, that was the west side study.

09-00:22:46

Farrell:

That was something different?

09-00:22:47

Walker:

That was in this same period. That was something that I proposed that we should do. The western edge of campus was relatively underdeveloped at that time. We didn’t have the biology buildings, we didn’t have the animal facility and we didn’t have the new public health building that’s there. Much of the area was underdeveloped land on the university side and on the city side to the west. We had the old parking structure at Addison and University and the city had vacant lots and a surface parking lot, which is now the low-income housing project and the Brower Center. At that time there were what I considered huge gaps in the development on the important interface between the city and the university. I got agreement that we should undertake a study and had a major advisory committee that included city and community people and students and faculty.

We hired Sedway Cooke, a well-known planning firm in San Francisco, who did a wonderful study that identified all the potential issues from an urban design point of view—where taller buildings might be located and how the land on both sides might be developed. I thought it was a fantastic piece of work. When we went to present it to the city council, one of the people on the council who never liked the university very much, said to me, “Are you trying to get us to do the right thing?” They really understood that this was very far-reaching, but it was also important. I took the position that Oxford Street was a kind of moat and what we needed was something seamless between us. When I had mentioned in my little written history that I thought we were still profiting from some of that work, some of it is because I remembered it and brought it to bear when I was serving on the Downtown Area Planning Committee for the city a few years ago. I think it also influenced the city and other people.

We never achieved any buildings of the scale that report recommended. For example, it recommended that the city’s then-surface parking lot at Oxford and Kittredge could be the site for one of the tallest buildings in Berkeley because it would block no views from or to the campus and it was a perfect location to have some very intensive development. When the city was

working on the plans to redevelop its parking lot there, I tried very hard to get them to have much taller buildings there. The Brower Center is only four stories as is the low-income housing project and it was, in my view, a huge lost opportunity because the city spent a huge amount of money on that project and perhaps might even have made money, if it had brought in a private developer and had a vision for something much bigger on that site. That was a really wonderful study and I referred to it when I was working on the downtown plan and found it still useful.

09-00:26:41
Farrell:

What were some of the principles that you mentioned were reflected in the report and the proposal that you had written?

09-00:26:50
Walker:

Some of it was that we needed larger-scale buildings and that we needed uses that would bring the city and the university together. One of the proposals in that plan was that the old printing plant, which is as we speak being transformed into the university art museum, that was the kind of suggested uses that should be brought to the downtown where they would have much more patronage and be easy for people to get to them. Of course that was very important to me because the campus was getting so overcrowded and moving the museums into the downtown would be a win as it frees up space on the campus as well. Those were some of the important ideas that were there.

09-00:27:45
Farrell:

You had also mentioned that there were five different landscape types that you identified on campus and their relationship to building of the various areas and architecture. Do you remember what those landscape types were and how they affected campus?

09-00:27:58
Walker:

Well, let's talk a little bit about where those concepts came from. The campus was studying different buildings and historic resources on the campus and decided it also needed to study the campus landscape. As part of a series of reports, a task force was set up to study the campus landscape. That included faculty from environmental design, forestry, botany and included planners and some administrators. I served on that representing the administration. That was a wonderful task force. First of all, we walked around the campus all together and had long conversations about the different kinds of landscaping around the campus and how they related to the different aspects of buildings. The other studies were looking at the different kinds of architecture that we had on campus.

This study made a number of conclusions, one of which is that we had some very distinct landscape types on the campus which had some relationship to the different building styles. We had classical landscape design around some of our beaux arts buildings. We had natural landscape in the eucalyptus grove and along the creeks. We had urban hardscape that related to the

contemporary architecture of the student union. I can't remember all of the five different types of landscape, but we truly have great treasures on the campus of many different kinds of landscape. One of the things I fear as I walk through campus now is that we are nibbling away at a lot of these spaces, some have been changed for disabled access reasons, some being encroached upon by buildings, so that there's less total overall resources of landscape. I find that the basic character of the different places on the campus have pretty much stayed the same and that's a huge part of the landscape legacy and history of the campus.

09-00:30:46

Farrell:

You also, at the same time, started a four-page campus planning newsletter that the planning office published frequently and I think had a wide distribution. Can you tell me what it was like to start that newsletter and what the content was that you included?

09-00:31:00

Walker:

This happened after I moved my office out of California Hall and moved into the planning office because I was working on planning issues with the planning staff so that was great. I then was physically close to them and worked under Sami Hassid, who was a professor of architecture and the director of the planning office at that time. I decided that I should use techniques that I had used in other projects. For example, when I was working on the acquisition of the Schools for the Deaf and Blind, I developed a newsletter that went out to anyone who had ever expressed any interest in the issue. It went to all kinds of community people, to community groups, to people on campus and it was a running commentary on everything that was happening so that no one would ever feel that they were not informed. Maybe they would be uninformed because they didn't want to read the newsletter, but I felt it was important to keep telling people what was going on.

The newsletter was related to my job as coordinator of physical planning in the sense that I felt much more information, broadly disseminated is always a good idea. I had articles that were related to whatever we were working on in the planning office. We're doing an environmental impact report on a building that's proposed, or an academic committee is working on a proposal for a new academic building, reported on things like the landscape taskforce— whatever was happening at that time. I would ask other members of the planning office to write little stories. I would write a lot of them myself, but tried to get various people involved in creating the content. It was basically— communication is good, and we will never suffer because more people know what we're all doing.

09-00:33:21

Farrell:

So, speaking of good communication and things being transparent and open, there was a transition in leadership at the end of this period of time when Bob Kerley left and became the head of the new development office and Ron Wright took over as Vice Chancellor. Can you tell me a little bit about their

different styles of management? I know that you had a complicated relationship with Ron Wright and if you could tell me a little bit about that?

09-00:33:57

Walker:

Well I'll tell you what I can. I probably repressed a lot of this because it was a painful time. Those of us who worked with Bob Kerley were very privileged. Bob was a man of no pretensions. He was a completely honest, direct person and you could tell him whatever you were working on and you could have a one-on-one conversation with him. He was a remarkable boss. I think losing him out of the administration was a big loss to the campus at that time. The person they hired to replace him, Ron Wright, I am not sure whether he had ever worked in academia before. He came from the Middle West, I can't remember where. He came in and the first thing he did was ask everybody to give him whatever dirt they had on everybody else in the administration and things that were very divisive and not collaborative at all. He set up a really uncomfortable tone for people.

I don't know exactly what happened in my relationship with him. He had grandiose ideas and he was telling me he wanted to use me in all kinds of ways. He said he wanted me to be the Director of the Planning Office, he appeared to be my champion, and then when the planning director office was actually advertised suddenly I was persona non grata. I have never understood it, except my suspicion was that he figured out that I didn't have any higher credentials and therefore I was not a worthy person. He was a man for whom status was hugely important. It certainly was for him, personally. That's the only thing I could figure out because I hadn't changed anything that I'd been doing to my knowledge. He sent me to Siberia. I wasn't invited to meetings. People I'd been working with weren't returning my calls. I overheard a couple conversations where I was being denigrated by people I'd been working with, which I had to assume were reflecting what he was doing. This was all very disturbing to me.

It was in this climate that the Planning Director's job was open and the interview committee had several people on the committee that were being influenced by Ron Wright's behavior towards me. When I went into that interview it was a very painful prospect because I expected there were people there who had already been told what they were supposed to do or if not had had their minds pretty well made up. Also I was almost frozen by what he was doing to me, so I didn't really prepare well for that interview. When I look back on it I'm embarrassed; I should have done a better job in the interview. Unfortunately, one of the other candidates was an architect whose profession was making presentations and managing architectural competitions. So, his whole work life involved presenting himself and presenting things, so I'm sure his interview was smashing and mine was probably very weak.

Anyway, I did not get the planning director job, which was a painful thing for me. It had been heartening that the planning staff that I had been working with

for the last few years were very supportive of me. They had given me a t-shirt that said, "DAW for Planning Director," which was very cute. I still have it somewhere.

09-00:38:23

Farrell:

After you didn't get the job, you sent in a letter of resignation. Can you tell me a little bit about what that was like for you to make the decision to resign and then the consequences from that?

09-00:38:36

Walker:

This was all a really difficult time. I was under a lot of personal stress, as well. My father had just died, not that that was unexpected, but still, that's always difficult. My stepdaughter had just been murdered by her husband in the middle of a messy divorce and so that was very traumatic for the whole family. So I was having problems with my personal life and I was already disturbed by the way Ron Wright was treating me. The new planning director, when he arrived, knew that I had been a candidate for the job and basically said to me, "Well, if you'd like to run the department, that's okay with me," which was even more shocking in the sense that it was as if he didn't really expect to have to do all the work involved with running the department. I wanted to do it and he was going to be happy to delegate it to me. That, combined with Ron Wright and everything else, I felt, "I don't think I can work here now." So, I sent in my resignation and went home.

Mike Heyman, the chancellor, called me at home and asked me if I would reconsider, that the campus valued me and they needed me and would I reconsider? I was very grateful for the call and decided that I would consider going back, but I really needed to figure out on what terms I would be comfortable going back. I talked to my attorney, who was head of a very prominent law firm in San Francisco, an old blue and knew some of the campus players. He negotiated with Mike Smith, who was the attorney on campus, and we came up with a plan that I would come back as the Associate Director of the Planning Office and the Director of Community Affairs. The previous Director of Community Affairs had died shortly before this had happened. Because so much of my work involved dealing with the city on various things, that was something I was interested in doing. It was agreed that I would report to the new planning director on all the planning matters, but on any of the community issues I would report to Mike Heyman. That's what happened, and I went back to campus and worked out a working relationship with Bill Liskamm, who was the planning director.

09-00:41:38

Farrell:

How long of a period were you absent from campus for?

09-00:41:45

Walker:

Not very long. A few weeks.

09-00:41:49

Farrell:

How much do you think that gender played into Ron Wright's treatment of you or the subsequent hiring?

09-00:42:05

Walker:

It was such a complicated time; it was very hard to know. I felt that gender was part of it and there never had been a woman planning director. It had always been a man. There hadn't been very many women on the planning staff before I was there. I'm sure that was part of it and I felt that was part of it. The Ron Wright factor was very complicated in this and I do not know. Ron Wright left the campus, was asked to leave, a year or two after this. Someone on campus told me that they had told the chancellor that they thought all the problems that I had had were because of who he was and what he was doing, so that I was one of the reasons they began to examine how he was behaving on the campus. He got the campus into quite a lot of difficulties. He started romancing the developers of a fancy country club out in Blackhawk and got the university involved in a museum out there that was a pet project of a guy with lots of dollars. He was bad news, all around.

09-00:43:28

Farrell:

So, in your new position, you were there as the Associate Director, that you had mentioned, of Campus Planning, and Director of Community Affairs. You continued to play a major role in campus planning, as part of your title suggests but you had just mentioned about how a lot of this work was managing the relationship with the city and the community and the university. Can you tell me a little bit more about that and who you reported to and what that was like to negotiate?

09-00:43:57

Walker:

Well, I was reporting to Mike Heyman, who was the chancellor, on that. I would try to confine my conversations with him to things that related to the city, and the Community Affairs person dealt with more than the city. I met with the chancellor and our state assemblyman once a month for breakfast to find out what was going on in Sacramento. I did have the opportunity to see the wider reach of the university as part of that job. One of the things that I did as the director was to establish ongoing meetings with city staff so we were keeping each other informed about what we were doing. All of the communications and things I'd been doing were Community Affairs issues I'd already been working on. I just continued to be open and I became the primary spokesman when anybody needed to talk to anybody in the city or the community about something because of my Community Affairs role. But most of the controversial issues between the city and the university are related to the physical development of the campus, my planning hat was equally important to my Community Affairs hat.

09-00:45:29

Farrell:

Can you tell me a little bit about how the ongoing meetings with the city, what some of the outcomes of those meetings were and I guess if that made your job easier or harder?

09-00:46:01

Walker:

I don't have a very good memory about the specifics. The meetings with city staff were normally very cordial. We were all in this together, we understood each other as planners managing change. The outreach to the larger community that often saw the university as a threat because we were the biggest developer in town was much more stressful and then we have a whole quarter in this community who don't like to change things. At that point, the city wasn't doing any housing development, very little construction was going on and the university was continuing to build and change. I would say that much more of my work was going to community meetings, trying to deal with problems in the community.

Periodically, I would try to resolve the use of People's Park and would work with members of the community who were deeply ideologically committed to keeping the park as it was, and members of the community who did not like the fact that it was not a welcoming place for most people to use, and students who didn't use it because it didn't feel welcome to them. I stepped in and out of issues like this as part of my Community Affairs job.

09-00:47:53

Farrell:

So, one thing that we had touched upon that was an important component of your work was how to make the campus less threatening to the community and the city was the California Environmental Quality Act, which provided a platform for proposals to have public comment periods. Can you tell me a little bit about your use of the feasibility studies and the environmental impact reports?

09-00:48:23

Walker:

The California Environmental Quality Act was the one way that the city and the community had any kind of control over the university. The university is not subject to the controls of the city, so it doesn't have to get any kind of permit from the city to build a building. Historically the university has just done whatever it's wanted. Once the California Environmental Quality Act was passed, it was required to do an environmental assessment of any major project and this includes public comments and the university has to respond to those public comments. When the environmental impact report (EIR) is completed, the public has the opportunity to sue over the inadequacy of the report. So EIRs became the way for the city and community to try to control the university.

It became really important for us to know how we were going to address the environmental issues. I talked a little bit earlier about using the environmental review process when I was working on the acquisition of the Schools for the

Deaf and Blind, where I decided to use that process in a very proactive way, by having, instead of one alternative that you're studying, I had three different alternative uses and we studied their impacts and used that to guide us in decisions about use. That was a much harder approach to take for most university projects. Usually when the university proposes to do something it knows what it wants to do, and it then is going through the motions as best it can to get it accomplished.

09-00:50:37

Farrell:

Did you use the environmental impact review as part of your work in this role, proactively, in the same way?

09-00:50:46

Walker:

Oh, absolutely. For a number of years, I was the primary person going to the community in all of the meetings about the environmental studies of any project that we were doing. I don't know where we are in the whole ordering of events, but when we started working on the new long-range plan in the end of the 1980s, I think I went to 120 different public meetings over a couple of year period. Some of these were presenting the proposed plan but many of those were meetings were part of the environmental review process where we needed to discuss it, where we needed to get comments. I became very accustomed to being the primary representative of the university at meetings where people were unhappy with whatever the university was doing. I had to develop a pretty thick skin to deal with those meetings.

A part of being a planner is setting up the chairs for the meeting. If it was a small meeting and we were sitting in a circle, usually no one would sit on the chairs on either side of me because clearly, even if friends of mine were there, they wanted to have their distance from the person who represented the university. It was very interesting psychologically, to be representing the university like that.

09-00:52:27

Farrell:

How did you balance that—balance having to develop a thick skin with listening to community, the residents, and also taking into consideration campus needs and goals?

09-00:52:43

Walker:

Well, I'm not sure quite how I balanced it and perhaps sometimes I didn't do it very well. I've talked earlier about my feeling the need for transparency at all times. I always approached any of my work as—I have to be completely honest. I cannot obfuscate anything. I will be talking to these same people a week or two from now, or a month or two from now—I can't say something that differs from what I'm going to say then unless I'm able to explain why things have changed. Transparency and directness, with both my external audiences and internal to the university, were critical to me. I think that was a problem for me sometimes within the university because I was more direct and outspoken than most other people were. I think that was particularly the

case because there were not very many women that worked at my level at the university.

I began to perceive that I talk too much, but I always had a good idea when somebody asked for an opinion and I felt that it was really important for me to express myself and also to convey to the campus exactly what was going on outside in the community. There's not a right answer to most planning problems so you have to be open-minded. You're going to learn something from the dialogue you're in the midst of. Planning is more of a process than reaching the product and the process involves listening and getting feedback and encouraging the dialogue, saying clearly what I thought but getting other people's thinking and letting that help influence my thinking was hugely important. That was the way I approached it.

Because there isn't a right answer in most of the things that I worked on I had to establish my standard for success. That was not necessarily that we got what we wanted for the university, or that I got what I wanted, but that I had managed the situation and had been as honest as I could that all the information had gotten out there. Success was not necessarily what other people might think of as success. That was the primary way I managed this.

09-00:55:57

Farrell:

At one point you began, as part of your work with the city, you started working closely with Dan Boggan, who was the Berkeley City Manager at the time and he eventually took over for Ron Wright when he left campus.

09-00:56:13

Walker:

Yes, Dan Boggan is the way it's pronounced.

09-00:56:16

Farrell:

Can you tell me a little bit about him, his management style, and maybe your relationship with him?

09-00:56:22

Walker:

I got well-acquainted with him when he was the manager for the City of Berkeley and really enjoyed working with him. He was very much the Bob Kerley of the city and of the different city managers I've worked with he was certainly the one that I knew the best and respected the most. I was very impressed with his openness and directness and willingness to have a dialogue. He did not view the university in a confrontational manner and he had very good management skills. It was a pleasure when he came to campus and replaced Ron Wright. I also felt I had a slight hand in this because Mike Heyman, when he was considering hiring Dan, asked me what my opinion of him was because I had been working more closely with Dan than anyone else. I told Mike I thought he would be a wonderful addition to the campus. Not only did he have great management skills, he was an African American man and we had never had an African American man at the top level of the

administration of the campus. I thought that was just a marvelous win for everyone all around.

09-00:57:42

Farrell: This is probably a good place to stop and change the tape.

[Audio File 10]

10-00:00:06

Farrell: Okay, this is Shanna Farrell back with Dorothy Walker on Thursday, December 4. This is interview number five, tape number ten. So, we were just talking about your time as Associate Director of Campus Planning and Director of Community Affairs. One of the projects that you worked on was the campus dispersal project, and it was a project that you studied sixteen other universities to see how they handled acquiring and developing land along the periphery of campus. One of the pitfalls of this is that those universities were sort of resource-rich, and Berkeley had limited land. Can you tell me a little bit about what it was like to work on that project, some of your findings, and then what subsequently was implemented?

10-00:00:56

Walker: I think I probably decided to undertake this myself. I don't remember if we had other people involved or not. I obviously discussed it with the planning director as part of the work program. The campus was getting overbuilt and we needed to make decisions about what kinds of facilities we could move off the campus but not create dysfunctions in the way the campus worked. We have a lot of dispersed facilities already. There are research facilities, the Gill Tract next to Albany Village, the Richmond Field Station and of course, much of the physics and high-energy research is at the Lawrence Lab. The campus has a long history of offloading activities to sites that are not in the contiguous 177 acres of the main campus. I decided that it might be helpful to see what other universities were doing.

I identified sixteen different universities that were mostly major public universities. I looked at some private universities, too, but ones I thought were not necessarily comparable with us in prestige, but were large universities and comparable in size and had major research components as part of their campuses. The most important finding I made was that, with very few exceptions, we were the smallest campus in terms of the size of our core campus. Just look at our sister campus UCLA, for example, we have 171 acres in our core campus and they have 411 acres. Now they have a lot of things going on on their core campus that we do not have, such as parking for 28,000 cars and a few other things that we don't have. Berkeley has never had parking for more than 7,000 or 8,000, cars most of them outside the 177 acres, so it's amazing to look at the difference. Of course, UCLA has a medical school with its own site.

Every campus has a different structure but in the campuses that were in urban environments the most common academic activities that were off-campus were medical facilities, which Berkeley doesn't have. And professional schools, particularly the law school and business school. The law school tends to have a separate calendar of its own. The other campuses not only had larger core campuses, most of them owned a lot of land outside and near their core campus. Or they had major facilities, such as we have like Richmond. So, we were a land-poor campus. We have about a thousand acres in the hills behind the campus, but that's pretty much inaccessible. We've put sort of heavy industry with the Berkeley lab in the hills, but I do not think the campus is going to do major building for environmental reasons in the hillside area.

It was sobering. It also said that the university, over time, if the central campus was not to become overcrowded, would have to be acquiring some more land near the campus given the commitment to our professional schools being on the core campus. Anything that was part of our core teaching process would stay on the campus but research facilities could move off campus. I did write a paper with another planning colleague for the college and university planning journal on this topic because I thought the study was worthwhile for other campuses to see what we had found. One of the results of this was later work that I did on planning for the Richmond Field Station, when we undertook a major study of how we might develop a research campus at Richmond. That, among other things, was one of the results of that study.

10-00:06:25

Farrell:

Can you tell me a little bit more about the Richmond Field Station and your work on that?

10-00:06:31

Walker:

That's a wonderful piece of property right on the Bay, on the marshlands of the Bay. Lots of little interesting research buildings that, over many, many years, have developed to serve particular purposes. There's a wind tunnel there, the earthquake shaking table, a lot of interesting research facilities none of which were coordinated in terms of where they were located, and a lot of open space, a big eucalyptus grove. I had earlier worked on a project there to serve the library. I can't remember if we talked about this or not, but the campus has a problem with the fact that its book collections keep growing. In the digital age I'm not sure if this is still the case, but at that time, when books and journals were all in print and occupy space, how are we going to continue to acquire new books and what do we do when we've exceeded the capacity to store them?

The university decided that it probably should throw away a lot of old books in order to create space for more books. The library did a study that indicated that it would cost more money to decide what books to throw away than it would to build a place to store them. So, one of the things that we did at Richmond, I was involved in the planning for this, was to build the Northern

Regional Library Facility, that's compact storage for little-used books. Unfortunately, the budget was very tight and so those books in compact storage are stored by their sizes. They are not stored by subject matter, so it's not a browsable library. You can order a book from it and get it within a day and you can go out there, and there are places to study. I worked on the first component of the building that I think has been added on to at least a couple of times. Not sure what's happening with libraries right now.

10-00:09:03

Farrell:

It's still in use. I order quite a few books from it and they give tours quite often, too, for staff. So, it's still in pretty regular high use.

10-00:09:15

Walker:

That's good. Then it's served its purpose. Rather than throwing books away, people are using it.

10-00:09:28

Farrell:

As far as campus planning goes, you were also working on faculty housing. You wanted to establish a program to transfer housing from aging and retired faculty to young faculty by building apartments near BART at reduced prices. Can you tell me a little bit more about this and the outcomes of this work?

10-00:09:51

Walker:

Well, this was another one of my "good ideas," that we increasingly are having problems attracting young faculty who more and more were living remotely from Berkeley. When I first went to work for the campus most of the faculty members lived in Berkeley. Over the years, more faculty members were living elsewhere and this was a transportation and parking problem and I thought it was a social problem, too. Perhaps faculty spend less time on the campus if they have a long commute to live somewhere else. I also thought that we have a lot of aging faculty who are living in their big houses in Berkeley, and Proposition 13 made it very attractive to stay in your house if you've owned it before Prop 13 because your property taxes were so low that you had no motivation to move out of a house that was too big for you.

I thought we might get some altruism as well as some opportunities by building some housing that would be apartments of a size and a location that would be attractive to our retired faculty and that would be part of a program where they would make their houses available to younger faculty members. I didn't think it through completely, but I decided we had to at least know where our young faculty members wanted to live before we started that program. So, I did a survey of incoming and young faculty members and found that there were a lot of lifestyle reasons why people were not living in Berkeley and, as our faculty was becoming much more diverse, which was a great thing, people also were diverse in terms of how they expected to live. It was not clear to me that we were going to have enormous demand for university housing or for big old houses in Berkeley.

Also, probably the politics of trying to put together this complicated scheme was not going to work—that if we were going to have some housing for young faculty we needed to build some that we could let them buy it, but sell it back at a controlled price. I made some trips to Stanford to look at their program because they have enormous land resources as well as unlimited money resources and they have a very, very large amount of housing for their faculty and staff on their campus. I realized that we would never be able to create, in any way, what Stanford had. I did start working on a small project that involved acquiring a former Catholic high school that had been closed that's in Central Berkeley. That included not only the high school building, but some large grounds and a small convent occupied by a number of aging nuns. We acquired this site and began developing plans for faculty housing on that site.

10-00:13:44

Farrell:

What were some of the lifestyle reasons for people not wanting to live in Berkeley?

10-00:13:49

Walker:

I don't think they gave us a whole lot of them. A lot of people said, "I want to live in San Francisco because I like the culture and I like the intensity there." People who thought Berkeley wasn't urban enough, and wanted to have a more urban lifestyle, or people who want to live by the water. At that point, the City of Richmond had just developed the housing at Marina Bay and so there was pretty affordable housing right on the water. So some of the faculty members were interested in that kind of housing, some of the people wanted to live in a rural area. It was clear that there was no one size fits all, in terms of housing, and if we were going to have housing we were not going to have a huge amount of demand for it.

10-00:14:40

Farrell:

Another issue that came up during this period was with People's Park, which has been a reoccurring issue. The park had been, I guess, continuously declining, but a Catholic social activist group leader, Dorothy Day, started bringing meals to people in the park. This eventually led to a big trailer that was brought in to serve meals and refused to leave. Can you tell me about how you got involved with this issue?

10-00:15:08

Walker:

Dorothy Day was a very famous radical Catholic activist. She herself is long gone but her legacy has lived on with radical activism among some Catholic clergy as well as laypeople. There was a group in Berkeley whose organization had Dorothy Day's name in it to indicate that they were going to keep confronting authority on issues of importance. This group had started serving meals in People's Park—and I don't remember how much we described People's Park, but we've done it well enough?

10-00:15:53

Farrell:

We have, definitely. Yeah.

10-00:15:55

Walker:

Well, it was continuing to be more and more a place for homeless people to hang out during the daytime, to try to sleep there at night. There was very little use by anyone else. The Dorothy Day group started serving food in the park and they wanted to have a permanent place in the park, rather than just bring the food in. So one day, without warning, a large trailer appeared in the park and they started serving meals and preparing them in this trailer right in the park. I went to the chancellor and said, "We have to take this out immediately. You cannot let this stay there. It's going to become a huge problem and I know it's going to be a battle to get it out, but you need to take it out right now because you leave it there, it'll attract more people to the site and we really will have a problem."

I articulated what I've often said, which was, take the pain now. On something that's difficult, dallying or postponing usually means that the problem is exacerbated. It doesn't mean that it goes away. Mike was very reluctant to go in and remove the trailer, which would clearly be a big confrontational issue. So, he said, "No, I'm going to go to the courts and ask them to give us a court order to remove it." He proceeded to do that, which took some weeks, of course. In the meantime, the Catholic worker group was serving their meals happily. The population was building there every single day, and problems were growing apace. When the courts finally ruled, they basically said, "This is university property. You can do whatever you want. If you want this trailer removed, just remove it." At that point Mike finally decided that yes, okay, we need to remove this.

A little group of us, working with our Physical Plant people decided that we'd pick the middle of the night and middle of the week at some time where we felt nothing would be going on and no one would be around, and that we would go in and remove it, and that we would take it—I think we were going to take it to our university property on Harrison Street and store it there. We weren't going to destroy it—we were going to let them have it back but we were taking it off this property. We all arrived in the middle of the night and I'm there to make sure things are going all right. Ray Colvig from our public information office was there in case the press got the wind up and we needed to talk to them about it. Our crew from physical plant went in with a truck and trailer to pull the trailer out of the park and discovered that the axles had been broken on the trailer because they wanted to make sure we could not remove it.

We worked all night long. I do not know what they did, technically speaking, but they did manage, just as the sun was coming up, to get the trailer out of the park and removed. Of course at that point we had created much more of a problem for ourselves in the park. Off and on for the rest of my time on

campus I kept trying to get the university and the city to agree to some uses that would bring enough other people to the park that it would dilute the negative aspects of the park. I was never successful with that. I proposed a number of recreation facilities, all of which were open space kinds of things—volleyball pits and basketball courts and other things that would use a significant amount of the park but were not actually building a building. I thought if we had enough activities, a critical mass of students would come and use them and it would begin to transform who was willing to come there. But both the campus administrators and city mayor were unwilling to do a number of things at once.

I said, “If you want to have change, you have to change a lot. You can’t just creep in the water.” Well, they wanted to creep in the water. Two different chancellors and different leadership in the city both did this at different times. Watering down, “Oh, let’s just put in one volleyball court,” things that were not enough change, and then it didn’t work, and so they were disappointed that it didn’t change anything. I worked on this problem off and on. A lot of my work was because it was very demoralizing for the campus police department to have to deal with the problems of People’s Park. It was just not in their portfolio to have to do what was basically social work policing in the park. I felt it exacerbated the relationship between the city and the university because who managed the park changed hands a couple times, the university gave the city management of it and the city gives it back to the university. I thought it made the relationship between our police chiefs difficult because this was a no man’s land, and it’s still a no man’s land.

10-00:22:22

Farrell:

Another issue that you worked on, that there were a lot of protests, but these were more student protests, was during apartheid. There was a large outcry about Cal investments in South Africa. So, several shanty villages were set up near California Hall, and there were frequent sit-ins. Can you tell me what you remember of the shanty villages, the sit-ins, and then subsequently, what happened on campus and how that issue was resolved?

10-00:22:49

Walker:

This was a very major issue and a really important issue. Many of us agreed with the students’ views that we needed to divest from investments in South Africa because it was an immoral place for the university to have its money. But we also had to deal with the reality of what the students were doing and how it was disruptive. There were shanties and things going on in the Sproul Plaza and on Sproul steps and they built a lot of shanties right around California Hall and made it extremely difficult for anyone to get in and out of the building. One of the things that was done was to set up a committee of campus administrators who had various responsibilities on the campus to decide on what our political strategy would be based upon what the students were doing every day.

I do not remember a lot of details about what actually happened every day, but I do remember that this committee met at seven o'clock in the morning every morning and reviewed what had happened the previous day, what students were doing, what the police were doing, what we wanted the police to do, and how we should behave. I was the scribe for that committee and I would type up the notes myself because we didn't want anybody else on campus to know what we were doing. I would give them to people the next morning so they would be sure that we knew what we were doing and then we threw them away, so nobody kept a record of what those notes were. It'd be kind of interesting if I had kept those because then we could look back and see what we had done. The Regents finally—and I think the Regents were meeting at Berkeley up at the Lawrence Hall of Science—agreed to divest. That was just a huge win.

The students were right, and I do not remember if that happened while the shanties were still up or not. That was an important campus issue that we all dealt with as carefully as we could because we did not want to exacerbate the problems that the shanties were creating. On the other hand, there was a lot of sympathy with what the students wanted to accomplish.

10-00:25:30

Farrell:

You also worked on the *New Directions in Transportation*, which was a handbook that circulated, and a series of meetings were called about some new proposals that you were working on. Can you tell me a little bit about the handbook and the response?

10-00:25:46

Walker:

I'd been working on transportation all along and I had management responsibility for the transportation planners that I had had on staff when we started the commute store, and who had been working all along. Gail Murray, who's now on the BART board, was one of the people who started working for me then in the early '80s. We also had working with us as an analyst, Sharon Bonney, who had been the director of the disabled students program but wanted to enlarge her portfolio and her experiences, and had been working as an intern for Dan Boggan and was assigned to help us.

We developed a whole refined approach to transportation and parking that, again, changed parking rules, tightened up the system. I think this is the first time we talked about having attendant parking, which we hadn't had before. This was not much different from anything else I did in transportation. Where people park on campus is one of the touchiest issues on campus so there was a lot of concern that we were changing the system again. There were a lot of different meetings with faculty and I handled all those meetings as I was good at public meetings. There was one day when I somehow felt I could not handle another meeting, and there was a big meeting scheduled that day, and I called Sharon. I don't know where Gail was, but I called Sharon and said, "Well, Sharon, I can't handle this meeting today. You need to do it." Oh, my

goodness, how am I going to do that? “I’m sorry. You have to handle the meeting. I’m going home.”

It never happened to me before or since but I went home and I started crying. I cried for two or three hours. It was like a little mini-nervous breakdown. Somehow, something had pierced my self-protective armor that enabled me to go to hundreds of meetings and talk to unhappy people about things they didn’t want to hear. I don’t know why that day was different from any other day. The meeting was no different from any other meeting, but somehow, I had reached my limit at that point. It was interesting because I came back the next day and I was fine and went on and handled the rest of the meetings. That was a little cautionary tale, I guess, about sometimes, one’s armor gets pierced.

10-00:28:59

Farrell:

How did you recover from that?

10-00:29:02

Walker:

I don’t know. As I say, I cried it out, I guess, because I was fine. I was perfectly fine the next day.

10-00:29:11

Farrell:

So, I guess leaving that position, in 1989, you became Assistant Vice Chancellor of Property Development, and you were in that role from 1989 to 1992. You were given your own department and a new title, and were the first woman to be an administrator with a chancellor title. Can you tell me about what that was like for you, to be the first woman with a Chancellor title?

10-00:29:38

Walker:

That was thrilling, of course. I was humbled and thrilled and happy. I remember shortly after I got that title being interviewed by a reporter on NPR and he kept referring to me as “Chancellor Walker,” and I could hardly accept that he was talking about me. I realized, okay, well, that’s actually not an inappropriate way to refer to me but I did not feel that I deserved that. The new department gave me an enormous amount of responsibility. Not only was I in charge of the development of all of our student housing and our off-campus properties, but I was given responsibility for real estate and I still had Community Affairs, and all of transportation and parking. I had done policy development in all of these areas, but I had not really had major management responsibility for anything.

I had never been the planning director, and I had been the director of Community Affairs, and I had had part-time staff who helped me on some of those issues. But, aside from all of the transportation, the commute store, it mostly had been policy that I had worked on. This was a huge sea change for me, to suddenly have a hundred people working in my department. In keeping with the study I had recently completed about things that move off-campus, I decided that I had to move my department off-campus. It was partly because

that was the right thing to do and partly because there wasn't really a place for me to have the managers together that I wanted to have, that were then located in various parts of the campus. We rented space in a building in the downtown, and shortly after I moved there the associate vice chancellor, Steve Barclay, decided to move into that building as well. He moved into the fifth floor penthouse quarters and I had the fourth floor of the building.

It was a very new experience. I took with me into my new department the planners from the planning office who had been working on housing and off-campus development, I think there were three of the planning staff that came with me, people who'd worked on Community Affairs with me, my secretary. I had a core of people that were already working with me or working on the issues I was working with, but I decided that Gail Murray would head up our new department of transportation and parking, and appointed Sharon Bonney to be the new director of the parking office. This was the biggest part of my portfolio because that involved the most employees and the biggest budget. Interestingly, probably one of the more difficult units to manage on the campus, because it's not a function that has much relationship to the academy. There's no good career ladder for people who are working in parking and transportation on the campus, so it's not an easy department. Because everybody hates parking controls and parking tickets, a lot of the staff have to deal with people who don't like what they're doing a lot of the time.

It was not an easy undertaking, to suddenly become the manager of this big department when I had not managed major things before. Real estate, at that time was one person and she now reported to me, so that was nothing like it is then. At that point, real estate basically involved renting off-campus space. I think at that time we were renting about 80,000 square feet of space. A few years ago, when I was working on the downtown plan for the city, the university was renting more than 300,000 square feet of space in the downtown. I assumed the real estate function which is a much bigger function now than it was when I was there.

10-00:34:57

Farrell:

What did some of your other responsibilities include, aside from the transportation and the real estate policy and management?

10-00:35:03

Walker:

I still had Community Affairs and I now was responsible for the planning and development of student housing, and for other campus research facilities off-campus. This was when I was already working on the Richmond Field Station study and working on the faculty housing project. So there was a lot of continuity in the things I had been working on, but I was working in a more focused way now because I had this particular responsibility. We did the planning and construction of a new building for student housing on Haste Street and were looking at other locations for new student housing. We tried to interest private developers in joint projects so they would build the housing

for us. The campus was beginning the process of considering the remodeling of the units, which had not yet happened. We were involved in some of the planning for that, as well.

10-00:36:15

Farrell:

So, in addition to some of the staff that you took with you, you also had listed some of the key people that you worked with, or took with you, were David Stoloff, Jackie Bernier, Lana Buffington, Julie Smith, Kevin Hufferd, and Jocelyn Wong. Can you tell me what their respective roles were?

10-00:36:41

Walker:

Jocelyn was the real estate person and she had not worked for me before. She was a new addition. The other people, David, Jackie, basically were housing planners. Kevin Hufferd was working on the research campus at Richmond and off-campus research facilities. Julie Smith was my secretary. Lana Buffington had been my primary assistant in Community Affairs.

10-00:37:12

Farrell:

You also hired Milton Fuji?

10-00:37:15

Walker:

Yes.

10-00:37:16

Farrell:

Can you tell me about a little bit about his hiring process?

10-00:37:22

Walker:

It was decided that I couldn't be the director of Community Affairs with all this management responsibility, so we needed someone to be in charge of Community Affairs. We had a hiring process and a committee was set up for interviewing. A couple of people who had worked for me were candidates, including Lana Buffington, who worked for me for a very long time. Milton, who I don't think had worked on the campus before, was hired to be the new Community Affairs director.

10-00:38:01

Farrell:

There was a shift in the reporting of this position, so that position started to report to John Cummins, the chancellor's assistant?

10-00:38:08

Walker:

No, that did not happen, but I was informed that the campus wanted Community Affairs to report to John Cummins, who was the assistant to the chancellor at that time. I can't remember—his title kept changing—whether he had a “chancellor” in his title at that point or not. He was the executive assistant to the chancellor and had increasingly acquired different management responsibilities. I'd worked well with John over the years because he had started out working for Bob Kerley shortly after I had come to work for the campus so I'd known him well. It was a shock to me when I'm suddenly informed that Community Affairs is going to report to John Cummins because John had never had community relations in his portfolio

before and it was something that I thought I did well and I enjoyed. Because of its close relationship to planning issues, I thought that I should keep it together.

So, I protested mightily about taking Community Affairs away from me and that it was inappropriate to give it to John. I thought that John had proposed to do this and that the chancellor was accommodating John, so I felt really annoyed that John had made a move on my nice, new empire. After I put up a big fuss that John didn't know anything about this, I was informed that Community Affairs will now report directly to Dan Boggan, and you can't object to that because Dan knows everything about Community Affairs because he used to be the city manager of the City of Berkeley. So, okay. I was still unhappy, and I was very unhappy that John had done this and it cast this pall over my relationship with John. Interestingly, just recently, two or three years ago, another campus administrator who was deeply involved in all kinds of things and is a friend of mine, told me, "You shouldn't be mad at John because he didn't want that responsibility. Mike Heyman didn't want you to be in charge of Community Affairs anymore and he's giving it to John because that was somebody that was close to him and that he was giving things to that he wanted somebody close to him to take care of." I never knew exactly what had happened. It was so long after that had happened to hear that.

Clearly, something had happened the chancellor had decided that he did not want me involved in Community Affairs anymore. Milton had already taken up occupancy in the space in my building, the floor that I had, and so he remained there. Lana Buffington, who had worked with me on Community Affairs, then reported to him. He had his own secretary and had a separate operation there. It was in the same building, so we did have a continuing relationship. He was now dealing with People's Park and community. I was dealing with the community insofar as the planning issues involved the community.

10-00:42:06

Farrell:

What was your biggest success in the role of chancellor or something that you found the most rewarding?

10-00:42:17

Walker:

The thing I found most rewarding throughout my whole career was mentoring the people who worked with me. When you have more people working for you you have more opportunities to do that. Of course you also have more problems when you have more people working for you, but that was the most satisfying. That's the thing I missed the most after I retired, those relationships. Helping people grow and move on to do something else and take on bigger responsibilities was one of the main joys of work, actually.

10-00:43:03

Farrell:

Have you kept up with the office since you've left and retired?

10-00:43:09

Walker:

I've kept up with some of the people who had worked most closely with me and have a little group that happens to be all women, that get together for lunch every couple of months. One of the women who I hired when I first set up my new department as my business manager, who had not worked for the university before was Alice Kubler, who's an extremely competent person. After I left campus she became the business manager for the health services and then for the Haas School and just recently retired. She went to New York with me for a week this fall. That's an example of relationships I still have with people who worked for me.

10-00:44:04

Farrell:

Are there any projects that you had put into motion that they're working on now, or are still trying to see through.

10-00:44:14

Walker:

Good question. We'll probably talk about this later, I worked on a plan for the city, and we can talk about some of those issues later. That will probably be more helpful time to talk about some of the continuing things, particularly in the downtown. Certainly a lot of the housing projects developed apace after I left campus. Some of the concepts that I had felt strongly about were incorporated in the remodeling of all of the units. I felt very strongly that the buildings that were originally built were the classic Corbusier buildings in the park, isolated from their environment and had no relationship to the street, were walled off, and needed to have stoops and entries on the street and relate to the street.

All of the remodelings have changed the way those buildings relate to the street and the new buildings have a much better relationship to the community than what they were building in the '60s. I felt that some of my thinking may have been thoughts other people were having but certainly my ideas were reflected in these buildings. People's Park has been an ongoing thing, of course, and I have worked on that a bit since I've retired, as well. We can talk about that later, too.

10-00:45:47

Farrell:

Sure. So, this is probably a good place to end for today, and we'll pick back up next time.

Interview #6: January 28, 2015

[Audio File 11]

11-00:00:08

Farrell: This is Shanna Farrell with Dorothy Walker on Wednesday, January 28, 2015. This is session number six, tape number eleven. Dorothy, last time we met we spent some time talking about your work as assistant vice chancellor, but I'm not sure we discussed why that move was significant for you. So, can you tell me a little bit about how moving into that position, what that meant to you?

11-00:00:40

Walker: The first thing it meant was an affirmation that I was important to the university because I was the first woman in the administration to have a "chancellor" in her title. That was very significant to me in a general way. The major aspect of becoming the assistant vice chancellor was moving from policy to management and operations. I had been managing a number of planners and a number of projects. I'd been managing all the studies of transportation. I had managed many consultants and other things but I had not, in fact, had direct management responsibility for more than maybe ten or fifteen people in transportation and in the planning office. This was a tremendous move taking on the real estate function that I had never had before, starting both planning and implementation for more student housing and research facilities. But the biggest new responsibility was, taking over the management of the entire transportation system, including the parking office. With the number of employees in the parking office, I had under me more than a hundred people and by far the largest portion of my budget was in transportation and parking. That was a very major change in the kind of work that I was doing.

11-00:02:28

Farrell: You had also mentioned that working with the parking office was one of the most challenging aspects of that position. Can you tell me a little bit more about what made that challenging?

11-00:02:38

Walker: As we've talked about earlier, I started out my career doing policy work on transportation that involved working very closely with the parking office staff and working with the faculty committees that were interested in parking. Parking was one of the most contentious issues on the campus and was a very big stress on the campus. The campus is an urban campus in the middle of the city—it has difficult access routes to get there, and increasingly, as the university's budget changed and the economy changed, more and more people who worked at the university lived not in Berkeley, but in suburban locations and other locations. There was increasing demand to park on campus because more people were driving to campus. At the same time we needed those parking lots for building sites. As I talked about earlier, what people had to pay for parking was always an enormous issue and that price was continuing

to go up as the cost of operations went up because as parking became more scarce we needed to use attendant parking and other things to help supplement the fact that buildings were now occupying what used to be surface parking lots. So, there were intrinsic problems dealing with an issue that is always one of concern in the campus.

Interestingly, I was at the Order of the Golden Bear dinner last night and one of the people who succeeded me as a manager in transportation happened to tell me a wonderful story about a professor who I shall not name, who had come to his office and demanded to see him and asked if he knew who she was. He said yes, he did, and asked what could he do for her and she said, "I want you to provide me a place to park. I can never find a place to park and you're the head of the parking office and I demand that you find me a place to park." Well, this was probably told to me as a bit of an anomaly, but it was representative of the way people who manage parking felt, that there were a lot of people making demands that were extremely hard to meet. That was a challenge. The parking office had historically been managed in various ways, but for a number of years prior to my department being set up they had been managed by the police department. It was not a function that related to the police department, but I believe it was almost a matter of geographic convenience because the parking staff had been located in Sproul Hall near the police department. So it was probably a matter of convenience.

When we took over the parking office we knew that we would be approaching it with not only the management outlook that we had but with all of the new policies that had just been put in place with our *New Directions of Transportation* that involved a lot of changes campus-wide and changes in the way the whole system was going to work. Although I was certainly aware of it, I don't think I had fully realized the implications of having a large number of people working for me for whom there were few career ladders on the campus. We had a whole cohort of people in the parking office who knew nothing but to check for violations and give out tickets and do clerical work in the office. They were mostly outside the mainstream of the academic enterprise and there are not necessarily other places within the university system where they might grow and get ahead. I think in some ways this was a different operation than most of the other things that were being managed by other managers on the campus. I was bringing in a new manager from outside the department and we had a lot of people who had been in the same positions, basically, for many years and did not have anyplace else to go.

That's always a management problem for a manager. One of the things I had prided myself in over the years before I became the assistant vice chancellor was mentoring the people who work for me and helping them grow and get a better position. I now had working under me—not directly because I had two layers of management under me—Gail Murray was my director of transportation and we had decided that Sharon Bonney, who had been the intern that had worked with us to develop *New Directions*, had formerly been

the director of the Disabled Students Program, who had studied in great detail the whole operations of the parking office, we decided that she should be the manager of the parking office. That's the way we set up the whole transportation operations. We started with great enthusiasm having moved from policy to operations, now we have the opportunity to really get our hands on the issues that we had been dealing with. The first thing we did was review all the positions in the parking office and realized that they did not have a lot of procedures for management in place. So we started performance evaluations, we wrote up job descriptions, we decided what the performance standards were for various positions and Sharon began implementing those.

After some time went by, I was taken aback when I was suddenly informed by Vice Chancellor Boggan that charges of racism had been brought against my department, and in particular, against the parking office, by five African American women who were working in the parking office. These women had gone to the US Civil Rights Commission in San Francisco and had been meeting with one of the staff members there for two or three months, discussing the issues as they saw them. I knew nothing about this, nor did I know that these five women had been unhappy with what was going on in our new operations. Dan Boggan, had known this was going on but only told me then what had happened and said that he wanted me and Gail and Sharon to enter into mediation with the five women who had brought the charges, and then informed me that the mediator would be the investigator from the civil rights commission with whom the five women had been meeting for a number of weeks. I was really taken aback because not only was I stunned that charges of racism had been brought against me when I had spent much of my life working on social justice and racial equality issues, but I was being asked to enter into mediation with a mediator who had already established himself as what appeared to be the ally of the people who were bringing the charges. But I have no say in the matter; my boss told me, "This is what you have to do."

Sharon and Gail and I proceeded to meet for a number of meetings with the representative from the civil rights commission and the five women. I expressed from the very beginning my belief that the women were not bringing these charges lightly, that they believed truly that they had been discriminated against, and I understood that's the way they felt. I said I did not feel that racism was involved, and in my agonized discussions with Sharon and Gail before we started the mediation, in trying to figure out why these charges had been brought, we decided that the only basis that we could identify was the fact that we were now managing the department, bringing to the department all the normal procedures used for management within the university, and basically, the parking office had not really been managed for years by the police department but had been just running itself. People were not used to having goals and performance standards and job descriptions and performance evaluations. We felt that management was being perceived as harassment and that was, of course, not our intent or we did not think it should be perceived that way, but we felt that that was truly their belief. I also

queried Sharon at some length about her behavior as the manager because I was not observing day to day what she was doing, and after much discussion with Sharon, I realized that as a disabled person in a wheelchair, Sharon had probably spent her whole life wanting to be treated like everyone else and that she treated everybody exactly the same. My long experience was that when you're working with minority people who have experienced discrimination their whole lives, they are extraordinarily sensitive to how you behave in relation to them. I believe that you have to be more sensitive in your interpersonal relations particularly with African American staff because if you, in the daily course of events, ignore somebody because you're busy, they may perceive it as a racial slight, when someone else will perceive it as simply, "She's busy, she's just not paying attention to me."

This is a kind of subtle thing that is hard to even talk about right now, but I tried to talk to Sharon about this. It seemed to me that probably Sharon had not performed what I would view as extra social courtesies that I believe were really important dealing primarily with African American staff people—particularly those who had low-level positions and did not have much opportunity for advancement within the system. There was no way I could talk about this in the mediation. I can hardly talk about it now because it's so difficult to articulate without sounding either patronizing or that you're discriminating yourself. I'm guessing that most of those African American women would have been appalled if I had said that, "I need to treat you more carefully than I might be treating my white staff," and yet, that was my perception that was part of the problem. We were there in the mediation and we talked with each other and expressed our views in several meetings, but basically there was not really any change in anyone's position. Gail and Sharon and I listened respectfully and heard everybody's concerns and they listened to us, but there was no sense that there was some specific remedy that we could offer or even that they were asking. It was quite a remarkable number of sessions that, in my view, seemed to go nowhere.

At the end, it was decided that my entire department, all hundred people or more, would have to undergo sensitivity training. Some specialists in the HR department set up sessions which we went to. While this was going on, the office of the president offered a very attractive retirement package. They had offered one the year before and this was a second offering. It was a very good package for me because, not having gone to work till I was 45, it was offering me extra years of employment. At that point, I was making a very good salary. I was feeling very unhappy about what had happened because I had lost my faith that Dan Boggan would be supportive of me or that I could truly trust him in everything. Dan was a man I cared deeply about. I helped recommend him for his job as the vice chancellor and I had always liked working with him very much so I felt quite betrayed that he had not told me when this complaint had come up, but had waited many weeks before he informed me, and then, basically, informed me that I had to go into this mediation session when I had had no warning that any of this was going on. So, I was feeling very stricken

about that. Also, I think I was feeling less valued. Chancellor Tien's management style was very different from Chancellor Heyman, and staff meetings for him, senior staff meetings, seemed to be pro forma occasions where he would make pronouncements and people might give reports, but no dialogue was solicited and participation was not encouraged. That was hard for me because I always had stuff I wanted to get my two cents in and it felt as though being part of upper management did not have the rewards of participating in some of the major decisions that were affecting the campus. My husband was not well, so that was part of the factors, but I was only sixty-two.

I had many good years left, as far as I was concerned because I hadn't started till I was forty-five, but here was this fantastic financial package being offered and I was not feeling valued and I was hurt. I had a reason at home to not be working ten hours a day. I decided to take the retirement package provided that I could come back part-time and do something worthwhile. Before I said I would take the package I pondered what I might do. The thing that was most important to me that I would like to accomplish was to try to heal the problems on the south side of campus—interestingly, something I had started working on when I was on the Planning Commission in the 1960s, when the whole People's Park event emerged. This was an issue I had never been able to solve and it was a festering sore even more now. Now, the economy of the avenue was in trouble. The political riots—periodic political riots whenever something happened on the national scene, anger was acted out on Telegraph—had been replaced by kind of recreational riots, when youth from mostly Oakland and Richmond would come in gangs at night and race up and down the avenue and break windows and steal things. The merchants were demoralized; everyone was upset about what was going on. Students increasingly didn't want to use their own neighborhood.

I went to Dan Boggan and said, "I am considering taking the early retirement package, but I would do this if I could come back half-time for two years and work on the revitalization of the Telegraph area." I gave him a budget and told him what staff I would want and how I thought the whole thing might work out, and that a big part of it would be getting the city to collaborate. He agreed to this and I accepted the retirement package.

11-00:22:40

Farrell:

So, before we get into that part, I want to back up and I have a couple more questions about before retiring and the investigation. Do you remember about what year all this started in, the investigation?

11-00:22:58

Walker:

Well, I retired in 1992, so I am guessing it was '90 or '91, probably.

11-00:23:07

Farrell:

Just so we can make sense.

11-00:23:12

Walker:

1989 was when I became the assistant vice chancellor, and so it would have been some time after that happened because some time had to pass before this happened. So, it might have been late in 1990 or early '91.

11-00:23:28

Farrell:

You had mentioned that the mediation, you went to a remarkable number of sessions but they didn't seem to go anywhere. Why didn't they go anywhere? Why did you feel like they weren't productive?

11-00:23:44

Walker:

I think that there was no middle ground. In mediation, normally, each person has something to give to the other person. In this case, Gail and Sharon and I did not believe that we were racists or had acted in a racist manner or that the five women who had brought the charges had been treated badly or treated differently because of their race. They believed that they had. There was no way to say, "What's the middle ground between us? We're just a little bit racist? Or we were just a little bit discriminated against?" There was no middle ground, so all we could do was talk to each other. The talk was probably useful in the sense that we had to express these things, our feelings, over and over again. So, I cannot say that this was a complete waste of time. At least some of it was probably useful just because we would not otherwise have had that many hours to spend talking to each other. In that sense it might have had some use. In terms of removing the taint that was upon the three white women who had been charged or the other side receiving the satisfaction that we admitted that we had discriminated against them, there was no way to have some middle ground for a conclusion.

11-00:25:44

Farrell:

Did that contribute to you not feeling valued?

11-00:25:51

Walker:

In part, but it also made me feel that I was in a not-very-hospitable environment. That's probably part of not being valued. Not feeling valued was as much the administrative management style of the chancellor, who didn't really want dialogue and participation and the kind of interactions that made being part of the administration very important to me. The combination of feeling betrayed by Dan Boggan, who had not warned me this was going to happen, which made me feel less valued, and feeling less valued because of the new management style of the chancellor; I think it was the combination of both.

11-00:26:47

Farrell:

So, when you negotiated your coming back at part-time after accepting the retirement package, what you worked out with Dan Boggan, how did your relationship change or continue? I guess what I'm getting at is, so you mentioned you felt betrayed by Dan Boggan, but then when you worked out that package to come back and work on some of the issues that you had been

working on for a while and really cared about, did that change your feelings about him at all or repair your relationship?

11-00:27:26

Walker:

When you're a manager in a big bureaucracy, you have to work with people all the time with whom you may have had some previous problems. Life is like that. There were still so many things about him that I admired and respected and had had so many wonderful years of working with him. So, I had all of those good things to rely on. I certainly felt he treated me fairly in the discussions about the retirement. It probably helped ease it some, but it didn't take away the fact that for me, being charged with racism was deeply hurtful—deeply hurtful.

11-00:28:17

Farrell:

In leaving your full-time position and then moving into part-time, what was your title, then?

11-00:28:26

Walker:

Well, one of the things I talked to Dan about was the fact that I was going to be working even more with the community than I had because this was going to be out in the community, that I wanted to keep my assistant vice chancellor title because I thought it had a lot of weight and I didn't want to give it up. I wasn't doing property development anymore and we started talking about all the different things that we might call it, and we finally decided to call it "Assistant Vice Chancellor-Community Enrichment," which was kind of a silly title but at least it was somewhat descriptive of what I was doing. That's the title we agreed upon. It was amusing that Chancellor Tien evidently either never received anything from Dan about this agreement or didn't like it. One of the things that Tien did as Chancellor was deciding that no one in the mid-level administration should have Chancellor in their title; that titles were not important.

So everybody was being reduced to a director, anybody who had an Assistant Vice Chancellor title. Well I had negotiated this title and I was damn well going to keep it since I thought it helped me in my work. We had this funny little dance that went on for the years that I was there part-time, where any communications that I would receive from Chancellor Tien were addressed to "Director Walker," and all the communications from me to him were on my stationary as "Assistant Vice Chancellor." I was never once questioned why my stationary had that title, so somebody in his office knew exactly what was going on. That was a little part of the not being valued. Evidently Chancellor Tien really did not understand psychic rewards and that titles are psychic rewards, there's no question about it.

11-00:30:43

Farrell:

So then, moving into the new position, you worked on the south campus issues. Can you tell me a little bit more about the work that you did at this

point and maybe how the issue had changed since you started working on it, or first became aware of the issues?

11-00:31:02

Walker:

Well, I proposed doing this because clearly the whole neighborhood was in serious trouble. It was interesting because the city was finally aware of this at the same time I made this proposal. My retirement plan had included a two-month hiatus between my actual retirement and my starting work on my new project, but just before my big retirement party, the mayor, Loni Hancock, who's now our State Senator, who was then the mayor, announced that she was appointing a taskforce to identify the problems on Telegraph Avenue and was going to begin a major effort to improve the situation on the avenue. As soon as I heard that she had done that, I immediately went to see her and told her about the project that I was about to begin and volunteered my services to help her. Instead of having a two-month hiatus I immediately plunged in, helped the mayor and the taskforce, so that I was beginning to set up the structure then for the work that would follow. When the taskforce report came back and it recommended that a full-time city staff person be assigned to work on this, I immediately drew up a draft work program that I'd already been thinking about.

As soon as that staff person came on board I went to meet with him to show him the draft work program that I had. He made a few little changes, and basically this became our joint work program. So within three months of my retirement I was already in the midst of a major project and I had a full-time person in the city who was my counterpart and who had a lot of power and authority. It was a very good beginning for the project. Shortly after we got started in the project, when the scope of work made it pretty clear we could not accomplish everything in two years, the campus agreed to extend my project for three years, so instead of a two-year project, it became a three-year project.

11-00:33:54

Farrell:

A couple of the other issues that you had mentioned that you worked on was Telegraph Avenue and revitalizing it a little bit.

11-00:34:02

Walker:

Well, that's what this whole project was. This project was revitalization of Telegraph Avenue. A lot of it was a community organizing effort. We had a barely breathing management person for the businesses on Telegraph Avenue, but there was no strong hand organizing the merchants and the property owners and those who had a stake in what was going on on Telegraph Avenue. A big part of our initial work was to get an organization started, we got the Telegraph Area Association started and we got everybody involved in it. The city staff and I were its staff until it got up and running and could have some staff of its own; we got some money for it. That organization became a big lobbying force for us. Then we started working on all of the social issues that were there and, having an association with some clout, we got both the

campus and the city police to be much more proactive in dealing with the gangs that had been periodically pillaging the neighborhood and got that stopped. We recommended a ballot measure that would control behavior on the streets. It was an advisory measure to the city council and we got that on the ballot and it was passed. I'm a lifelong member of the ACLU, but it was very discouraging to me that someone took that measure to the ACLU who threatened to sue the city if it were implemented, and so it never was implemented. It's interesting—most of the measures that were in that proposal have been implemented in many other cities to deal with unruly street behavior. We've been left behind in part because we were maybe first in trying to deal with that issue.

A major part of the work was how to address the needs of homeless people who were on the street and runaway teenagers. I began working with the churches and the social service agencies and with the social workers and the health department and the housing people in the city. It was a great project because it had so many facets to it and got me working with all kinds of people. Just getting the two police chiefs, the campus police chief Vicki Harrison and Dash Butler the city police chief, to communicate more, just talking with them, setting up meetings where they are together in the room so they had to relate more than they had been doing. It wasn't that they were necessarily antagonistic; I think it was just they each had their own fiefdom and working together was something that they did accept in emergencies when they had to work together. There were a lot of really very interesting things, and I learned a lot about homelessness and its intractability. Many of the homeless people on the streets were mentally ill Vietnam vets, probably post-traumatic stress; we know more about that now than we did at that time. A lot of the homeless people had problems far greater than homelessness and needed all kinds of services.

I started working with various homeless service providers and began to learn much more about it. I realized that the city had a policy of providing a nighttime place for people to sleep but nothing was provided in the daytime. I decided we had to provide a good place for people to be in the daytime and I identified a piece of university property in West Berkeley that we were not using and got the campus to agree that I could offer this property for community use. Working with my counterpart in the city, we wrote a grant to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to create a daytime center and we were short-listed on that grant, and we had the East Bay Community Foundation standing by, ready to match it if the grant came forward. I had talked with councilmembers, but evidently I had not done a good job with the one councilmember in whose district this property was located. She never told me in advance, but suddenly we were informed that the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation was withdrawing the grant because the city had objected to it. Not the council but that councilmember. She didn't want a homeless facility in her district, even though it was in an industrial neighborhood—it was not near any residential property. That was an incredible blow and highlighted the

shortsightedness of politicians, affirming my long-held view that district elections are not appropriate in Berkeley, where someone can be elected by 1,200 or 1,500 people and they can control citywide policy with what happens in their neighborhood. That was very distressing because it stopped something that I think could have been very helpful. Of course, the disappointment was exacerbated by my anger at myself for failing to convince that councilmember about the worthiness of the project.

11-00:40:37

Farrell:

What do you think it is about Berkeley that attracts, like, a homeless population? Berkeley, I think, is sort of known on Telegraph Avenue for the amount of homeless people that kind of congregate there.

11-00:40:58

Walker:

Every major urban area now has a significant number of homeless people. This is a longer story than is appropriate here—it goes back to the 1960s when the first psychiatric drugs were introduced and there was this romantic notion that you could give mentally ill people medications and you didn't need mental institutions. Ronald Reagan, when he was governor, closed our mental hospitals and said, "The local community should have mental health centers to serve them," but of course no money was ever provided for that. So, we, in the '60s and early '70s, created a whole population on the streets that formerly had been institutionalized, or who had had places to go. Then we added to that some mentally damaged Vietnam War vets, and, over time, we began adding more people who were homeless because of poverty, unemployment or other mostly economic reasons. In Berkeley and most other parts of the Bay Area the development of new housing had been suppressed by people who didn't want more growth, and by the unholy coalition—I think we talked about this before—of the anti-developer Left and the NIMBY, "I've got mine and I don't want anybody else to get it." When you don't have enough supply you have increasing prices and the people on the lowest rung of the ladder are the ones who don't get housing. We have created this whole housing problem.

Berkeley may have a somewhat larger number of people on the streets but I'm not sure how much greater it is than other places. I could probably get that data, from Terrie Light at the Berkeley Food and Housing Project, who I'm sure has all that data. Probably the young runaway homeless kids who are on the avenue are here because it's Berkeley, because Berkeley has some romantic image for them. Those kids have been dealt with in different ways and I'm not up to speed on what people are doing with those kids now, but when I was involved there was a whole program to try to help those kids. One of the things a program needs to do is get them to go home—many of them had homes and they ought to be going there. In recent years, I've come to realize that we are not going to solve the problem of homelessness. At least, not in my lifetime. We failed to build housing for many years and now we're trying to build housing when land values are so high. The demand is so great and we haven't created the supply so now we're trying to create the supply in

an economic environment where it's really expensive to build. San Francisco is facing that, Berkeley's facing that, it's a huge issue. Through Prop 13 and everything else we've so starved the public sector we're not going to go back and open mental institutions. There's not going to be money to open the kind of community service centers that we should have had. The growing income inequality is such that people are homeless now when they were fully functioning in our society—they're homeless because they cannot make enough money to afford a place to live, their salary is so small that they can't afford a place to live.

I realize that when all of the systems that supported mentally ill people were closed down we created a group of people that need very special kinds of help. I don't know if you saw the article in the *Chronicle* on Sunday, but San Francisco is going to do a new experiment that I thought was very exciting for the hardest people to bring inside. This is one of the problems of dealing with homeless people. There's a core of people who have lived on the streets too long or who have mental illness so that they don't want to be confined or managed in some way. The city, San Francisco, is going to try having a center where groups of people who have congregated together in their support systems and little tent cities under freeways will be brought together to a service center and will be individually helped and will be promised an actual place to live. But the ability to have social contact with each other will not be destroyed. San Jose just recently wiped out a whole homeless encampment that had been going on for years. They didn't offer all those people help, and they basically dispersed people into much less supportive places, when before they at least were supporting each other and had developed kind of a community.

In my work with the Berkeley Food and Housing Project right now, I think it's very important that the space in the new building that we're working on for them be as flexible as possible, so that over time, as we think more creatively and appropriately about how to help various components of a homeless population, we have facilities that can be used in whatever way we have figured out is the best way to use them. So this is a little off subject, but something I think is a very important social issue and I'm still deeply involved in it. I probably would never have gotten into it if I hadn't been working on the Telegraph project.

11-00:48:08
Farrell:

You had mentioned that you had formed the Telegraph Area Association and then, once you had enough clout, you started to make some more moves: was that strategic? Was that part of your plan?

11-00:48:20
Walker:

Oh, yes, definitely.

11-00:48:22

Farrell: Can you tell me about why that was effective, or what about that model worked?

11-00:48:29

Walker: You mean the community organizing?

11-00:48:31

Farrell: Yeah, and establishing yourself.

11-00:48:34

Walker: The main thing that worked was getting the commitment from the city for a full-time staff person and getting their full attention. After a year and a half, when we got the most egregious problems on the avenue under control, the city stopped assigning a full-time person to this. From then on, everything was an uphill battle. It's been my long experience, over many, years, that the city's attention span is very short and if there's a crisis, they're very good at jumping on it, but getting sustained, long-term attention to something doesn't work very well. I think it's partly elected officials have a short perspective. I think it's complicated by our district elections where we don't have parties running with a big city-wide platform, but we have just a bunch of individuals running in each neighborhood and the coalitions are informal rather than organized with a clear program. I may have lots of complaints about the way the university does things or doesn't get things done, but when the university decides it wants to do something it will stick with it for the long haul.

In all the speeches I've given over the years about the university, one of the things I would always say was, "The university is forever. Its perspective is really long." That may be a problem, such as being willing to live with People's Park since 1969, knowing that maybe sometime in the future they will solve it, but I contrast that with the city where their time horizon is very short. Getting the city to collaborate on a long-term basis is really hard. The city, of course, views the university as the 800-pound gorilla because it is so big and it's not subject to the city's rules. So, there's this irreconcilable chasm of completely different modes of operation, different time perspective, different missions and different kinds of commitments.

11-00:51:17

Farrell: So, speaking of People's Park, that was another issue that you picked up as well, correct?

11-00:51:23

Walker: Yes.

11-00:51:23

Farrell: Can you tell me about your work at this point, in the early/mid-'90s, on People's Park and how that compared with your work with it previously?

11-00:51:34

Walker:

Well, I had been having—oxymoron—management responsibility for People’s Park off and on for years. I didn’t actually have management responsibility now, but I saw that land as a major part of the problem. I kept recommending things to the campus in terms of how it might be used. One of the things I suggested was that the new dining facility that was about to be built be located there because it could be located on part of the site. It would attract thousands of students every day, and that the other half of the site could still be used for a park but there would be so many students there that would be comfortable with each other so the homeless people that were hanging out would just be absorbed into the larger group and it would be a wonderful solution. That wasn’t going anywhere, I think in part because the housing office wanted to get the project going and they didn’t want to bite off the political problem of that land use.

One of the things I did as part of this south side project was look at all the land uses on Telegraph Avenue in terms of future development. One of the interesting things is the number of one-story buildings on this commercial street, particularly, the block between Haste and Dwight that backs up against People’s Park, all one-story commercial buildings. A perfect opportunity, it seemed to me, if the university would acquire a couple of those properties and do a major development and utilize a portion of People’s Park with development that would open into the park. There were all kinds of ways of thinking about using a little piece of it or having development that would open into it, things that people are now talking about, but nothing is happening.

11-00:53:53

Farrell:

You had also mentioned that sort of at the end of this, there was a lack of communication between the city manager and the council. How did that end up affecting your work towards the end of your three-year period?

11-00:54:11

Walker:

Oh, I don’t remember that.

11-00:54:14

Farrell:

That might have been what you meant about the city not having a full-time staff person.

11-00:54:20

Walker:

That was it, yes. That was the loss of their attention. There were no more riots. We had a new organization they could deal with. The police were collaborating better, we had joint police patrols going on. We initiated a planning effort for the south side. So, okay, things are okay, we don’t have to dedicate any staff to this. Losing their attention when the surface problems were better was kind of par for the course.

11-00:54:55

Farrell:

One thing that I didn't ask you about that you had mentioned in your written piece was that you had a retirement party at the Alumni House. Can you tell me a little bit about that?

11-00:55:06

Walker:

Oh, yes. That was very, very nice. When I told my staff I was going to retire, they decided that I should have a major retirement party. They really did a beautiful job. The whole campus was invited. There was wonderful food. My nephew, a professional pianist, was asked to come and play. The Chancellor came. They had arranged to give me the Berkeley Citation, which is one of the highest honors you can get on the campus, which was just remarkable. There were lots of speakers. Vice Chancellor Kerley, the person who had originally hired me, was invited and asked to speak. The mayor came. Dorothy Walker Day was proclaimed in my honor. The funniest thing, and something I hadn't heard before, Bob Kerley talked about hiring me and interviewing me, this forty-five-year-old woman who hadn't had a career before. He described sending my résumé over to the HR department asking them for comments. He said their comments were, "This is the longest résumé we've read for a woman who never earned a nickel in her life." It renewed my gratitude for Bob Kerley taking a chance and hiring me.

11-00:56:59

Farrell:

We're running out of time on this tape.

Interview 6: January 28, 2015

[Audio File 12]

12-00:00:05

Farrell:

Okay, this is Shanna Farrell with Dorothy Walker, on Wednesday, January 28, 2015. This is session number six, tape number twelve. During your whole time, you've done a lot of work outside of Cal or affiliated with Cal while you were there, which includes work with the Berkeley Dispute Resolution Service, the Downtown Berkeley Association, the Berkeley Community Fund, the Berkeley Food and Housing Project, Livable Berkeley, the Downtown Area Plan Advisory Committee, and the Berkeley Design Advocates, as well as the Chamber of Commerce, which is quite an impressive résumé. One of the first things that you started doing sort of in conjunction—correct me if I'm wrong—with your work at Berkeley was the Berkeley Dispute Resolution Service?

12-00:01:01

Walker:

That was a small assignment, but in some ways, related to a number of the other things I've done, which is being a founder of so many different organizations. In the 1980s it was decided by the courts that they needed informal ways for people to settle disputes rather than small claims courts, which were being crowded with people suing their neighbors over small problems. So an organization was set up, under the direction of the courts, in Berkeley and they were just setting up the board. Dan Boggan, I guess, was asked if somebody from the university would sit on the board. I think he asked me because of my organizational skills. I was appointed to serve on the first board of the Berkeley Dispute Resolution Service and I was probably only there for a year or two mostly dealing with organizational issues. That was one of a string of things that I did that were organizational building, including the Downtown Berkeley Association, which also was started in the 1980s, under a historic preservation and economic development program. I served on their board for a number of years.

From its inception I was representing the university, but I operated as a totally full member of the board and felt that the major contribution I could make was to help them build the organization and learn how organizations should work well. That was another interesting assignment. I also represented the university for several years on the board of the Chamber of Commerce. They gave me a couple of awards when I stopped my membership because again, I brought organizational skills to an organization that was mostly entrepreneurs more concerned with their own businesses. The chamber was not a very well-run organization at that time and did not have a lot of participation or members. In recent years it's had better leadership and involvement of a lot more movers and shakers in the community so it's become a much more important and active organization than it was at the time I was involved.

12-00:04:13

Farrell:

You mentioned that you brought some of your organizational skills: what were some of those skills, and how did you sort of identify where the gaps were in the skill set of the small business owners?

12-00:04:25

Walker:

I was worried that you'd ask me that question because it's very hard for me to actually say what I did. I'm trying to think what did I do in all of these organizations? I tried to have them set up orderly procedures, I tried to set up committees, subcommittees, to deal with things. The basic structure of how you make organizations work—in a new organization you don't have any of those things. Having someone who pushes the organization along by suggesting how it get its work done was primarily the advice that I was bringing to those organizations.

12-00:05:17

Farrell:

So, when you left the Downtown Berkeley Association, you were honored for your contributions. Can you tell me a little bit more about?

12-00:05:28

Walker:

The Downtown Berkeley Association gave me a nice clock with my name engraved on it as a gift and the Chamber of Commerce gave me a couple of big plaques for service to them. I don't even remember what particular things I had done. Perhaps they were something special, but looking back at it I'm sure it was just I always came to meetings, I paid attention, I tried to get something accomplished at every meeting. I tried to organize the discussion if nobody else was doing it. I was my bossy self. I was in there corralling the group and making sure it got something done. That was appreciated by these groups that were not doing a very good job or were brand-new and didn't really know how to organize themselves.

12-00:06:28

Farrell:

What were some things that you learned from your time working with the Dispute Resolution Service, the Berkeley Association, and the Chamber of Commerce? Some of the things that you kind of took and used in your work that followed?

12-00:06:46

Walker:

Well the skills that I brought there were simply refined and improved in working with many different kinds of people. That's what I'd been doing for many years in my volunteer work, before I went to work for the university, working with a variety of different people in different things. My community outreach for the university involved working with community groups and people on different issues. I think I learned more and each experience added on to whatever I could bring to the next group that I was working on. It's, I guess, what we think of as old people having wisdom, it's accumulation of experiences that give you perspective. That accumulated knowledge, it's very useful.

12-00:07:50

Farrell:

Another one of the organizations that you worked with was the Berkeley Community Fund, and you started working with them around the time that you retired in 1992. You were contacted by Jeffrey Shattuck Leiter—I might have mispronounced that—to start a local philanthropic organization. Can you tell me about when he contacted you and sort of how he sold you on that?

12-00:08:16

Walker:

Yeah, he was a friend of mine and I had known him from various community things. He had briefly been the mayor, actually an appointed mayor, when Loni Hancock resigned as mayor to take a federal position in the Clinton Administration. He was active in the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association but he was also a businessperson and owned a lot of real estate in Berkeley. He was very helpful and supportive when I was working on the campus long-range development plan and even appeared in a video that we prepared about the plan. It was very good to have a high-profile community person who was being supportive of the university's growth plans rather than simply throwing rocks at the university. He and I had become personal friends as well and he invited me and Mal Warwick, a progressive community person and the owner of a small business in Berkeley that provided direct mail services to nonprofits for fundraising purposes. He's expanded that into all kinds of worldwide, interesting philanthropic things since then. Jeff had the idea—I think it was to celebrate his fiftieth birthday—that we should set up this philanthropic organization. Jeff has been a great friend and a wonderful guy, I'm very fond of him, but he's kind of a butterfly. He gets great ideas and gets things going and then he flits off to do something else.

I thought it was a great idea and Mal agreed; we felt there was a lot of untapped wealth in Berkeley that could be used to address social and economic injustice in the city. We all had progressive views about that and we thought this is a great idea. We conferred with the director of the East Bay Community Foundation for some advice and then we went off seeking a few other board members, but we also went seeking some seed money to get started. We went to our friends that we thought had the wherewithal and asked them each for \$5,000. Told them what we wanted to do, and I was impressed at the number of people who gave us \$5,000. So we had a good bit of money to get the organization rolling and we invited a number of prominent people in the community to join our board, including elected officials and the chancellor.

Steve Oliver, who owned the biggest construction company in the East Bay; Narsai David, the food and wine guy, with a major program at CBS at that time; Maggie Gee, a physicist at the Lawrence Livermore Lab and a longtime Berkeley activist in the Democratic Party; Loni Hancock, former Mayor and head of major regional agency appointed by Clinton and others. A lot of people with big name recognition, connections to lots of groups; we thought we really had a winning combination. Martin Paley, the executive director of

the San Francisco Foundation, who lived in Berkeley, came on our board. Not necessarily all at the same time, and there are many people I'm not mentioning over the years, but a lot of different important people in the community. Russ Ellis, who was a vice chancellor on the campus. With our hard nut for starters, we hired Ed Church as an executive director and decided we wanted to start operating some programs to deal with social issues with young children, primarily, in South and West Berkeley and support programs that related to early childhood and young children. We got grants from different foundations so for several years we operated some interesting programs that were trying to address the results of the inequities and injustices in our society and how they affected poor people in Berkeley. Once the foundations thought we should be going it alone we needed to be raising a lot of money. We were never able to do it.

We at one point allied with East Bay Community Foundation so they would manage our money for us, and got advice from them. Then we affiliated with the San Francisco Foundation and got advice from them. Somehow, we never got any major donations. After the foundation money ran out and we couldn't raise enough money we had to stop operating programs ourselves and then each year we gave the money we did raise to non-profits in the community doing good work related to our mission. We also had a successful high school scholarship program, but we were giving just token amounts of money, one or two thousand dollars, to poor kids graduating from Berkeley High who came from families in which they would be the first person to go to college, who had a greatly disadvantaged upbringing but had done well at Berkeley High. That program was very rewarding and one of the people that we asked to come and help us select scholarship winners came on our board and then he established a scholarship of his own. We had people who liked to do things themselves, but over the years we realized that we are not unlocking the money that we know is in this community and we don't know why. The only thing we could guess was that people liked to give money away themselves in Berkeley and they didn't need an intermediary. We had an example of Alba Witkin, who died recently. She and her husband had a very large amount of money because he was a legal scholar who had written and published the legal commentaries that every lawyer in the state would buy.

They established their own foundation and they gave away the money themselves to groups. They didn't want to give us money—they wanted to give the money away themselves. After a number of years the board decided that the cost of managing our operations was making it difficult for us to give away much money because it cost us something just to have an organization. It was decided that we needed to change the nature of the organization. The board decided that instead of giving grants to a variety of organizations we should focus entirely on the scholarship program We already knew how to run that but we should give much bigger scholarships. We had a new board member who was knowledgeable about a program in Oakland that involved not only four-year scholarships, but involved mentorship so that each high

school graduate had a mentor who would work with them through their whole four years at college. The scholarships were confined to four-year colleges, I think we had someone who gave us some special money for community college scholarships, but basically for four-year college scholarships. Four years, \$4,000 a year for four years, \$16,000, is a substantial amount of support. It was our hope that that money would enable children who were the first in their family to go to college to not have to work to make up the gap that most scholarship programs offer.

Interestingly, Mike Heyman, former Berkeley Chancellor, was on our board at that time. He said, "I'm not sure why you're doing this because so many people are giving scholarships, if these kids are really worthy somebody is going to give them some money." The Community Fund proceeded but they did retain the annual dinner that we had started at the very inception. When we first started the Community Fund, the director of the East Bay Community Foundation suggested we needed to do something that involved the whole community in a high-profile way, to get started. That was very good advice, so we decided to have a big community dinner and honor organizations that were doing good work in social and economic justice issues that we were interested in. At that time, I was serving on a little committee that the Service Clubs of Berkeley had to select someone to receive a biennial award that had been given since 1929 to Berkeley's most useful citizen—normally somebody of great importance to the community, and towards the end of their career, who had made a lot of contributions to the community. Service Clubs were not only somewhat in trouble, I think, with declining membership and other things, but they were running out of steam with the operation of deciding and giving out that award and the ceremony for doing it. Because I happened to be working on their committee and seeing their loss of interest in doing this, I proposed that they transfer the right to convey this award to the Berkeley Community Fund. We negotiated with them and they agreed that we could.

At our first dinner we not only gave awards to two or three community organizations and to an individual or two who had done some good community work, but we gave the Benjamin Ide Wheeler Award, which was well-known in the community as a major honor, and that that became the centerpiece of this dinner. By honoring different community groups who were working on social and economic justice issues we also had a very diverse group of people coming to be honored. The honorees family members and people from their organizations came. It was just wonderful in this community that often is battling each other with different factions, that this dinner was a true coming-together of all kinds of people. That first dinner was thrilling to us, because we had 250 people or more at the very first thing. This was our organization's first thing out of the box so that dinner continued. When the Community Fund changed its mission to just scholarships it did keep that dinner and still gives the Wheeler Award.

It no longer gives any of the other community awards, and that's unfortunate because the composition of the attendees is much less diverse than it used to be because there's not the interest of all these diverse community organizations that used to be honored or had been honored and would come. The dinner's still well-attended and it's much more of a fundraising event now for the scholarship program. The scholarship program works well because they can get individuals of means to sponsor a student, and people know exactly where the money is going and they feel personally connected to the recipient. I don't know if the mentors sometimes are the donors—I think sometimes they are—but usually the mentors are other community people who are interested. All the mentors I've talked with have found it very, very rewarding. I've taken my son and his wife to the dinner a couple of times and they've talked about possibly becoming mentors. It's very rewarding to a lot of people.

12-00:22:44

Farrell:

During the early days of the Berkeley Community Fund, how did you start to learn about developing and grant-writing?

12-00:22:55

Walker:

I'd been doing grant-writing of course on the campus. I'd gotten transportation grants for equipment, I'd written grants for that homeless center for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, so it wasn't that I hadn't done that before. Ed Church, the person we hired, had experience with that. Among the board members and our staff we were able to write grants and get money to get going.

12-00:23:36

Farrell:

Was grant-writing in this context different from at Cal?

12-00:23:46

Walker:

I can't say I remember how much hands-on I was involved in writing the grants for the community fund. I worked with Ed on this, but whether I actually wrote grants myself I don't really recall.

12-00:24:11

Farrell:

So, right around the same time that this was getting founded, you began to work on the Berkeley Food and Housing Project, and this, I think, stemmed from your work with Telegraph Ave and the south side of campus?

12-00:24:29

Walker:

I had worked with various providers of services to homeless people or people on the streets in the Telegraph project and I kept tabs on what they were doing as part of the Community Fund work. We were looking at what all the community organizations were doing—we were giving them grants, giving them money. We gave money to the Berkeley Food and Housing Project because we liked what they were doing. We gave money to BOSS, another homeless service provider. There may have been some other homeless service providers we funded. We were keeping tabs on what everybody was doing

because we were giving out grants we were raising money for. Increasingly I was impressed with what Berkeley Food and Housing was doing. They were one of the community organizations that we honored before we converted to the scholarship program. We also gave individual awards to people working on homeless issues—like Davida Coady, who runs a drug rehab program but also was involved with homeless issues.

Perhaps I got involved because of Patrick Kennedy, who was a big developer of housing in Berkeley, and during the years when nobody else was doing it or willing to run the gauntlet of the city's permit process he was the one developer who was building housing in Berkeley. I knew him from my time on campus when I was in property development and I would meet with developers, trying to get them to build a project that would include housing for the university and we would do co-development with them. I think Patrick was advising Berkeley Food and Housing Project and suggested that they get me involved. I think the first meetings I had with them in my retirement period were when Patrick was there. We were meeting with city staff, homeless services staff and talking about issues, mostly where facilities could be located and how we were going to meet people's needs. I started becoming a kind of informal advisor on sites and locations as they were hunting for places to build a building. Sam Davis, a professor of architecture on the campus, had done a lot of work on design of low-income housing and housing for people with special needs, and Sam was an advisor too.

Whenever any of us would identify a potential site, we would get together. Sam would do some sketches of what the capacity of the site might be with different kinds of designs and then we would discuss the politics of how we might acquire the site, which was part of my expertise, and how do we deal with not only the politics but the practicalities of it? This went on for years, until I got on the Downtown Area Plan Committee for the city, where I then had an opportunity to actually deal with this more directly.

12-00:28:41
Farrell:

How did this overlap with your work with the Berkeley Design Advocates?

12-00:28:47
Walker:

Berkeley Design Advocates is an organization I have belonged to since the 1980s. It's been around for a long time. It's a small group, thirty or forty members. It meets once a month for breakfast and its primary function is to try to improve the quality of design of buildings in Berkeley. It's a group of planners, designers, architects, landscape architects, professionals in the design profession. They take positions on development issues from time to time but mostly they review proposals for new buildings and make comments on the design and how it might be improved, and will then sometimes go to the meeting of the Zoning Appeals Board or whoever might be working on the permitting of the building, and comment if they're supporting the project or not. They have procedures so they aren't knee-jerk deciding how to support

something. Any public positions have to be proposed a meeting in advance and then the next meeting has to decide it, so it takes more than a month for it to take action on anything. I've enjoyed this group because it keeps my hand in with people in my field I learn a lot about the new developments that are going on in town, and get to use my accumulated knowledge of things, to comment on things occasionally. Sometimes I get involved in an issue because it needs to be addressed.

For example, this past year, one of the huge controversies in the city has been the Postal Service's proposal to sell a lot of post offices all over the country because Congress has restricted their funding so much. The Postal Service was separated from the government and made almost a private corporation and required to be self-supporting. So, they've started this enormous program selling off some of the most historic buildings in cities all over the United States, including the downtown Berkeley post office, which is not only a historic building but one of the most beautiful buildings in Berkeley. It's hardly being used anymore because number one, there's not as much mail as there used to be, and number two, the Postal Service organizes how it sorts mail in a very different way. It has a huge sorting center out in Richmond and so in the Berkeley building, only the retail portion, the area where you go to buy your stamps, is still functioning. The rest of the building is empty. The minute this was proposed everyone in town got up in arms, which was justified because it really is outrageous that they want to sell all these post offices. Starting out proposing which ones to sell and communication with the city was basically nil.

I was concerned because the people who don't like to change anything were not just talking about trying to stop the Postal Service, but saying we have to preserve the building in exactly its present configuration, and nobody was thinking about, well, what if we can't stop the post office from selling it? They maybe have some independence, but it's still the federal level, and we're not going to have a lot of say about this, so we need to be thinking about what are we going to do with this wonderful building?

12-00:33:17

Farrell:

We can pause, if you want. Okay, we're back.

12-00:33:22

Walker:

We were talking about the post office.

12-00:33:23

Farrell:

Yes, and the Berkeley Design Advocates.

12-00:33:28

Walker:

I organized a display for Berkeley Design Advocates (BDA) in downtown Berkeley showing how old post offices throughout the country had been reused in wonderful and imaginative ways. The ELS architects, some members who were part of BDA, did some wonderful work developing

graphics that showed how the existing post office building might be reused, but also all kinds of displays of other post offices and how they'd been reused. We got the lobby of the side entrance to the Wells Fargo Bank to give us space for a month to set up the exhibit, and the day we opened it we were picketed by the "Don't change our post office" people, but I think it was a helpful display. It showed we don't have to tear the building down—we keep it, but the back section of the post office, which is not historic it had been added on a later date, could have a taller building build behind that could be integrated with the post office. We had some creative ideas about how it would be reused. That was one of the things we did, and I wrote an op-ed piece for Berkeleyside, our local website, about the post office and why we needed to be open-minded about how it might be reused, even though I certainly supported the post office returning its retail function there. It was foolish that they were selling off these buildings that they needed to be thinking creatively about using. Part of my motivation in all of this was the knowledge from meetings with the mayor and other people on this, that the Buddhists who owned Dharma College and the other buildings on that block were interested in buying the post office. It was clear to me that if they bought the post office and used it in the way they were using the rest of the block we would have an entire block in Downtown Berkeley occupied by uses that have almost no public uses whatsoever. This would be a huge mistake in the downtown but it was very hard to talk about this as a public issue. That was one of the things that we knew was a possibility.

The chair of Livable Berkeley and I went to one of the Planning Commission hearings, where they were discussing a proposal to rezone the entire civic center area to require public uses—something that would have constrained all the developments in the civic center area—in order to solve the post office problem. Which, from a planning point of view, was absolutely crazed. The political pressure on everybody from the "Don't change our post office/Don't sell our post office" was huge. Eric Panzer and I were the only two people who went to the Planning Commission to try to have the Planning Commission keep an open mind. We were viewed as the enemy when we arrived by people, some of whom had been camped out on the front of the post office for months. That issue has still not been resolved. About six or eight weeks ago, it was announced that one of the major developers in Berkeley had a tentative agreement with the Postal Service to buy the post office, but then a couple of weeks ago it was announced that that had fallen through. I don't know what that means. I am still concerned that the Buddhists might buy it and use it for purposes that would not attract a lot of people. This is bad business, that the Postal Service is doing and Congress is responsible for it by not funding the post office. They required them to pay in advance all of the retirement for postal employees for the next thirty years, which has just put this enormous financial burden on the whole system.

12-00:38:23

Farrell:

Well, you had mentioned, as part of this issue, Livable Berkeley. That was founded in 2002 and you've been involved with them since their inception, correct?

12-00:38:36

Walker:

Yes. I retired from their board two or three years ago, I think in 2012, after ten years. That was another organization I helped found. In 2002, we had an informal organization of people to oppose an initiative measure on the Berkeley ballot that would have restricted development all over the city; it was an amazingly destructive proposal. We organized opposition from the League of Women Voters and the Sierra Club. We got a lot of the key players that voters would understand involved and we defeated that measure soundly, I think 80 percent, huge defeat. Afterwards we decided that we needed to have an on-going organization that was a positive force in the community and that was more proactive than the Berkeley Design Advocates and that had a broader kind of membership on the assumption that the nay-sayers would be continuing to try to stop development, which of course was absolutely true. We set up an organization and we had our first meeting and invited people to come. The nay-sayers came to the meeting and sort of trashed the organization and verbally trashed the meeting, so it was decided that although we would have members, it would be a board-directed organization, that we would not spend a lot of time and energy having public membership meetings all the time to decide things. It would just be too difficult.

So it's been a board-driven organization. It's had the same problem as the Berkeley Community Fund in terms of raising money. Part of it is I don't think people in Berkeley like to raise money, board members want to work on the issues but they don't want to work on raising the money to keep the organization going. It's had a struggle because it needs not only more members, but it needs more members who will give sums of money. Twice it had enough income to hire staff, but in recent years it's been operating with volunteers who've run the organization. It's probably had more clout than its size would justify, actually, because there are so few voices who speak positively for things, or who speak intelligently for things. They were very helpful coming and making comments when I was working on the Downtown Plan Committee. It was nice for me because I could help craft what Livable Berkeley would say at the same time I was a member of the committee, so that gave me, in a little way, two bites of the apple. They've been very, very helpful.

The most high-visibility thing they've done in recent years has been as the sponsoring organization for Sunday Streets, which is a program that has closed off traffic on Shattuck Avenue from Rose to Dwight Way for a whole Sunday in October, and opened up the street for bicycles and kids and families and strollers and scooters and pedestrians. It's not a commercial event like a street fair. The local merchants can take advantage of it but nobody can bring

in a tent and sell stuff. There's music and activities and fun things to do but it's not a fair where you're going to be badgered by people wanting to sell you something. It's simply celebrating our togetherness on our public streets, and that's a very popular program in a number of other cities. It's not a cheap program to operate, so the first year was a big job, raising the money for it. Got a small grant from the city. Last year, the city gave much more money because I think they saw how popular this program was.

12-00:43:26

Farrell:

Why is it expensive?

12-00:43:30

Walker:

You have to close all the streets, so that's police, traffic controls. Clean up. I would have to ask the people who run the program what all the expenses are, but I think a lot of it is how you control and relocate the traffic in order to vacate two miles of a city street? That's a big undertaking.

12-00:43:59

Farrell:

Then, another thing that you worked on for a long time, a few years, was the Downtown Area Plan Advisory Committee. You were appointed a council member for your district in 2005. Can you tell me how you got involved with them and about some of your work on that committee?

12-00:44:19

Walker:

That was a major city committee that grew out of a lawsuit regarding the campus' long-range development plan, which was the plan that came after the last plan I had worked on. There had been a lot of contention between the city and the university about that plan and its environmental impact, as the only control the city has over the university is the environmental review process because the university is not subject to the city's rules. Usually the city is suing the university over the inadequacy of its environmental impact reports. In my years at the university I spent many hours answering all the questions and dealing with all the issues in environmental impact reports because those were such an important political tool for any neighbors or the city to use. Part of the settlement of that lawsuit was that the university would participate with the city in the development of a new plan for the downtown because the university's long-range plan had identified the fact they were going to be doing more development in the downtown. I was appointed to the committee by Councilmember Betty Olds who represented my district. The mayor appointed Will Travis, who was the chair of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, as the chair of the committee. Trav understood that is environmentally best to accommodate population growth in already urbanized areas. He was a master politician and the perfect person to be the chair, but the mayor also appointed a woman from the local Sierra Club.

Our local Sierra Club chapter doesn't understand the environmental importance of urban development. It's basically an anti-development group. So, the mayor's two appointments basically canceled each other out because

he appointed a very smart woman who wanted bioswales in the sidewalk dividers but didn't want any taller buildings and was a very, very skilled person on the committee. Various council members appointed people of all points of view. Those council members who found jousting with the university to be politically useful appointed people who had been jousting with the university for many, many years. There were people on this committee that I had dealt with in my university role years ago who were still there to joust with the university. The first two or three meetings of the committee were almost entirely university-bashing and trying to disempower the university representatives who were there because the basis of the committee was the agreement for collaboration, but they did not want to accept that. That took several meetings to quiet that down. It was a hard slog for the university reps to come—I'd been there and done that—my counterparts currently in those meetings where I would have been there twenty years before. It was fun to be on a committee representing the city, dealing with the downtown that I had worked on before from the university's point of view. It was serious work and we met frequently. About midway through it was very clear that we were pretty much evenly divided into a faction that wanted much more development downtown and a faction that wanted historic preservation and did not want much more density downtown.

Interestingly, we had started out with total agreement on our goals for the downtown. After a lot of input from informed staff that agreement included that the downtown was never going to be a major retail center as it had in years past. The way retailing works now would not work in our downtown. You cannot attract a major retailer to your downtown unless you give them a huge parking garage and you pay them to come. You have to have a lot more land resources than we do if you want to attract a major retailer. Major retail has gone elsewhere and the big boxes are elsewhere and people are going to Walnut Creek or they'll go to San Francisco, but the notion that you're going to have a department store, as we did when I was a young adult in Berkeley, that's not going to happen. We all wanted the downtown to be reestablished as the heart of our city and a place that would attract people from all over town. We all agreed it was not doing that. Council members were telling us, that people in their district were saying, "I never go downtown because there's nothing that I want to do down there." There were the few movie houses and the theatres but not much else to do.

Fortunately, as the committee was beginning, we were beginning to see the impact of the new housing that had been painfully built despite continued opposition by Patrick Kennedy in the downtown. Over a ten-or-fifteen-year period, he had built about 2,000 beds of housing occupied almost entirely by students. That, plus the fact that the Telegraph area problem had never really been solved and a lot of students now were coming downtown because there were students living downtown so there was beginning to be a little renaissance of small-scale things that serve students. Mostly places to eat, but it's beginning to get better. There was total consensus in the committee that

the downtown needs to be viewed as a neighborhood, it's a different neighborhood, and it needs to be more a complicated neighborhood, and it needs to have goods and services that serve the entire community, and we get those goods and services by creating a neighborhood there that will support them. The differences of opinion between the two factions seemed to be that ours was a reality-based view, from my point of view. That is, you have to have a critical mass of people and development before you're going to generate the kind of activities on the street that the total committee wanted. The other committee members thought, "We can keep our old buildings and we won't build any tall buildings, and somehow, we'll have enough people down there to make it work." It wasn't realistic, it seemed to me, but when we got right down to the end of the committee, we lost by one vote.

That was basically a political failure on the part of my faction and I really feel personally responsible. We had had one member of the committee, somebody I had worked with on homeless issues when I was on campus, who came up to me at one of the first meetings and said, "I'm going to do whatever you do on this committee because I really trust you." He was not deeply understanding of all of the issues and I failed to keep communicating with him and cultivating him as much as I should have. I didn't realize it, but when we got down to the end of the committee the other side had been wooing him away. When it came down to a vote, we lost by one vote. That was a painful, painful lesson. Well, even the watered-down report that my faction didn't like was not accepted by the people who don't want any change, so they immediately went to the ballot to try to overturn it. We've had two different votes—I can't even remember all the history now; there's just so much going on. One of the joys of being old is you don't have to remember all of this so well. It wasn't until this past November that we got a third definitive vote to affirm the downtown plan previously adopted that is now going gangbusters.

We now have proposals for a sixteen-story hotel with a conference center, an eighteen-story apartment building to be built behind the Shattuck Hotel, a major 120-foot apartment building for family-size units that will be at Berkeley Way and Shattuck Avenue. There's a lot happening, and it's very affirming that these votes to support much more density downtown have passed in the majority in every single district in the city. It's not just one faction of the community but the whole community is supporting having a revitalized downtown with taller buildings. It's going to happen.

12-00:54:19

Farrell:

How does that feel for you? You've been working on these issues and wanting that for so long, and working towards that for a large amount of your career. Now that this just happened, what's that like for you?

12-00:54:30

Walker:

It's huge. It's huge, it really is. I feel that all of this work is finally beginning to pay off. Probably the sadness is, at the same time I'm working on the

homeless issues, is when you've thwarted development for so many years, that you don't catch up. You don't catch up, and we're still going to have to fight for these buildings one building at a time, which is my concern. I think right now we're in a little bit of a honeymoon period because the vote was so definitive this last time, but I don't believe the people who want to preserve everything and who don't like change, or who hate developers, they're not going away. They are going to keep fighting and they'll make it hard. They'll complain about the design or the public benefits or whatever else they can complain about. I think maybe for a little while, we've tamped down their using the ballot to try to stop things because they lost so ignominiously this time, but we shall see.

12-00:56:00

Farrell:

Well, I think that is probably a good place to stop for today. That feels okay to you?

12-00:56:04

Walker:

Good! Feels great.

Interview #7 February 3, 2015
[Audio File 13]

13-00:00:06

Farrell: Okay, this is Shanna Farrell with Dorothy Walker on Tuesday, February 3, 2015. This is interview seven, tape number thirteen. So, we've spent a lot of time talking about your work and what you've done over the years. Can you tell me a little bit about some of the things that you enjoy doing outside of Cal or outside of work?

13-00:00:32

Walker: There are quite a lot of things I've enjoyed over the years and of course they've evolved as I've gotten older. When I first retired I did a lot of serious backpacking with my children and that was fantastic. I can't do that anymore, although I still like to go hiking. Gradually the kinds of hikes and their difficulties have declined, but that's always been a major enjoyment for me and something to share with friends—but also, something I've enjoyed doing by myself. When I was in my sixties, I was hiking alone on Mount Tamalpais and fell and broke my leg on the back side of the mountain where nobody was hiking, so that was an interesting experience. I managed to find a stick and hobble to a fire road and finally somebody passed by and I sent them for help. I love hiking. I love the fact I can see Mount Tamalpais in the view from my deck here because I have hiked every trail on Mount Tamalpais many, many times. Interestingly, when my mother was going to Cal she used to take the ferry to Marin County and then there was a railway that you could take up on to Mount Tam, so she used to hike there in 1920. It's kind of a wonderful family tradition to go hiking on Mount Tamalpais.

I love gardening and that's something I started to do to have some solitude and found this a very enjoyable thing. I don't take it enormously seriously, but I get a lot of pleasure out of growing flowers. Have tried vegetables but found that flowers were much more fun. I really love traveling and have been to Europe a number of different times. I've taken some hiking trips in Europe that were fantastic. I have done some traveling within the United States but not as much as I would like. I'm hoping to do more of that in the next few years because some things I need to do before I die. I've been to Mexico and I've been to Hawaii a number of times. I was just in Hawaii last week. One of my favorite places to travel is New York, and I go there once or twice a year. I go there particularly in October because there's a convention of all the cabaret singers and I'm very fond of cabaret music. I started going to that twenty-five years ago, when I was on the plane to New York to visit my brother, who was a professor of sociology at CUNY and had just recently moved there after being a professor at UC Santa Cruz for many years.

On the plane on the way to visit him, reading the *New Yorker* magazine, "What's Happening This Week" described the fact that for the first time there was going to be this cabaret convention at Town Hall. Well, that really

interested me, so as soon as I arrived in New York I raced out and bought a ticket and went to one performance and realized that was fantastic. I've been going essentially every year. The convention is four nights of cabaret. I usually go for three of those nights and as I've been a long-time patron, I get some very good seats now. The performances are now held in the Rose Theater in the Time Warner building, a beautiful venue part of Jazz at Lincoln Center. It's a great place to go to hear any kinds of performance.

I learned to love New York through the eyes of my brother, who had been at Madison at the University of Wisconsin and then at UC Santa Cruz. He moved to New York in late middle age as he had always wanted to live in Manhattan and he and his wife of many years had divorced. He wanted to get out of Santa Cruz, and he bought an odd but wonderful fifth-floor walk-up in the East Village in a building that was twenty-five feet wide. His apartment was twelve feet wide and because he had the top floor he owned half of the roof. He developed a perfect Berkeley, California kind of garden and a gazebo on his roof where he entertained his students and his friends, who all had to stagger up six flights to get to his wonderful garden on the roof. He loved to walk and I loved to walk so going with him to learn about New York was just wonderful. I would walk with him to work every day and he would walk from Sixth Street to where the graduate center for CUNY was located at that time, which was Forty-Second Street right across from Bryant Park. They're now located in the old Altman building at Thirty-Fourth Street, across from the Empire State Building. His last office before he died looked out at the Empire State Building. I would enjoy the way he walked to work, which was to stop in the various parks and various places to get coffee or newspapers along the way.

I would go to the theater. In addition to the cabaret, I went to New York to see theater, museums, as well as to see all the wonders of the urban spaces and the parks. My brother was very deaf so he couldn't enjoy the theater anymore, but we would walk to work in the morning and I would go off and visit museums and city walking. I would usually join him for dinner somewhere near the graduate center. I would go to the theater and he would go back to the office and work in the evening, and then he would come to the theater and pick me up and we would take the subway home together. I think of him still when I go to New York riding on the subways on the East Side, the condo where I normally stay is in Murray Hill, on the East Side. I'm still riding the Four and the Six going up and down that side of Manhattan.

My other joys are theater, which I've mentioned in New York, but I have been involved in theater for many years in the Bay Area. ACT, the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, recently gave me a pin for having been a subscriber for more than forty years. I think I've been a subscriber there for at least forty-five years. I was also one of the original subscribers to the Berkeley Repertory Theatre. When they first started on College Avenue I was living in the Elmwood and started there with four seats so I could take my

children to the theater. I still have the four seats at ACT, started so I could take my children there, I now also subscribe to the Aurora Theatre and to the Shotgun Players so it's a lot of theater at home as well as what I normally do when I go to New York.

13-00:08:25

Farrell:

So, you also still spend time on your family ranch, is that correct?

13-00:08:29

Walker:

Oh, yes. Going to my family property in the mountains is a significant part of what I do. I was just there this past weekend. I can't remember if we talked about it before, but my extended family owns 260 acres in Calaveras County, at about 4,000 feet elevation. It's very near the Calaveras Big Tree State Park. My dad bought this property in 1943 from the descendants of the original homesteaders. The extended family, the descendants of my parents, are now about twenty-eight people. We all own this in common and we recently did all the legal work to set it up as a limited liability corporation. It's a very important part of our family. No one is dedicated to it as a farmer so we have a bit of a problem managing our old apple orchards, but my brother lives there, my one remaining sibling, and his two sons live there. The two sons both have their own lives. One of them works for the Wilderness Society and he happens to be an expert in timber, which is our primary crop, and his other son has a small newspaper he publishes in Calaveras County.

The ranch is a fantastic place. It has a twenty-five acre meadow and two ancient barns that were built in the 1880s, one of which is probably the tallest structure in Calaveras County. We have trouble maintaining all the things on the property, particularly managing our fuel load, because we have more timber growth than we can manage. We're right now in the process of working with Cal Fire on a grant to reduce some of the fuel load on our property. We would like to do some more timbering, which we do occasionally to thin the forest, and my father used to do it rather regularly when he needed the income. He would cut the biggest trees. We now want to save our biggest trees and we try to cut the smaller trees in order to retain the joy and the beauty of the great forest with the older, bigger trees and a small amount of the under-story. Right now, there's no market for timber at all because the salvage operations from the huge fire in Yosemite last year has overwhelmed the capacity of all the mills. There's no reason to timber this year, which we had planned to do, so we'll be delaying that. We go there for family meetings and family gatherings.

I have had a major undertaking in the last few years, which was restoring an old house at the ranch that had belonged to my sister, who died some years ago. That's been a wonderful experience, in terms of designing all the details of the restoration of this house, and working with my son, who's a contractor and who did the work. It cost a lot more money than I had expected to spend but we have a wonderful house that will now accommodate all the members

of my branch of the family on those few occasions when we're able to be there together. We have two ponds on the ranch that are great for swimming, and one of my other recreational activities is swimming. That's my primary form of exercise and recreation, swimming every day, and in the summertime, I get to do it in the open air at the lakes at the ranch and that's wonderful. The hiking at the ranch is great, too.

13-00:12:49

Farrell:

Can you tell me about some of the—you've touched on it a little bit—activities that you've picked up since you retired?

13-00:12:58

Walker:

I've gone back to community involvement from the community point of view, in contrast to when I was representing the university in the community and much of the things that I did working for the university involved the community. Since I've retired I've done much more on the community side. We already talked about the Berkeley Community Fund and Livable Berkeley and the Downtown Berkeley Plan, all things that I've done much more or initiated since I retired. I continue to keep my hand in. I was at the Planning Commission just a few weeks ago, giving them a radical proposal for how they ought to address the fact that we've suppressed the housing development we should have been doing for the last forty years. I'm continuing to rock the boat on some things. One of the long time planning commissioners, when I walked into the room before the meeting began, looked at me and said, "Oh, are you here to make trouble again?" I will probably continue to make trouble. Which may be viewed as trouble by those who don't want to change anything, but from my point of view I will continue to be an advocate for positive change and for those things in our society and in our local community that we need to be addressing.

I've also done something that surprised me a bit. I've joined a women's club, the Town and Gown Club, a social club you join by invitation. There are many people that I know who were already members of that club but I just joined last year. It has a lot of different, interesting events with speakers and book reviews and some just social activities. They put on a play once a year, and so I have a role in the play they're doing next month and I will be taking up most of my weekday evenings for the next couple of months in the preparation of that play. That's a lot of fun. I've also joined a gardening club, which is the same motivation as the Town and Gown Club—a way to have new friends and develop new relationships. One of the problems of getting old is you lose your friends, and joining new things is a way to have some new friends.

13-00:15:45

Farrell:

So, you did mention that you're involved in a play, but as part of the interviews, you've talked about how important music and singing was in your early life. How has that continued to play a role up till now?

13-00:16:00

Walker:

Probably not as much as I would have liked. Sometimes I wonder what would have happened if I had pursued singing seriously because I probably had the potential to have had some level of a professional career. Now I just sing and play the piano for my own entertainment but occasionally for family gatherings. A particular highlight of the gatherings is a big party I have before Christmas that involves forty to fifty family and friends coming for dinner and then singing Christmas carols for an hour or two. That's, according to some family members, the highlight of Christmas for them. It's something that I have been doing for forty years. I hope I can do it forever.

13-00:17:03

Farrell:

Speaking of family events and family, can you tell me a little bit about your children now as adults and how your family has grown?

13-00:17:11

Walker:

I think we've probably covered before that I have four children. My oldest son, Tad, is a contractor and he lives in Oakland. He owns a number of small rental units. He's married to Mary Dixon, a marketing specialist. She was the marketing director for Cal Performances for a number of years. She's now a consultant and works with Stanford and the symphony and was recently the interim marketing director for MOMA. She's enjoying more freedom as a consultant than she had in her job at Cal. My son, Gary, is a journalist and writer. He wrote a wonderful book last year, *Cool Gray City of Love: Forty-Nine Views of San Francisco*, that was on the bestseller list almost every week for more than a year. It's now out in paperback and is on the bestseller list again. This is a remarkable literary work. It was chosen as the best creative nonfiction by the Northern California Book Awards, as well as by the Northern California Booksellers Association. Gary was a journalist with the *Examiner* for a number of years, and he and a few others left the *Examiner* and founded Salon.com in the beginning of the Internet era, which was probably the premier Internet magazine in addition to *Slate*. Gary was the executive editor at *Salon* for many years. He was spending time writing his book in recent years, but now is the executive editor of *San Francisco* magazine and also writes a history column every Saturday in the *San Francisco Chronicle* called "Portals of the Past."

My daughter, Janet, lives in Santa Cruz with her partner. She lives in a rural part of Santa Cruz and I think I would describe her as a homesteader who grows fruits and vegetables and has some rentals on her property. My youngest son, Robert Walker, by my second husband, is a film editor. He lives in Culver City and he and his wife adopted a baby a few years ago. So, he has a four-year-old daughter. He makes trailers and TV spots and has had a very successful career in the film industry. My grandchildren—each of my children have one daughter, and my son, Gary, also has a stepson. My oldest granddaughter is thirty-three and the youngest granddaughter is four. In between, a twenty-one-year-old who's a senior at Sarah Lawrence and an eighteen-year-old, who's a freshman at the New School. There's a lot of pull

in the family to go to New York, as Zachary, Gary's stepson, also lives in New York and is very active in the theater there. Just wrote and produced an off off Broadway play based upon *The Brother Karamazov*, so he's a very ambitious young man. So, when I go to New York now I have lots of family to visit.

I also have two step-daughters, Barbara and Catherine, and they each have two children, now all grown. Barbara works at the Haas School on campus as the administrator for undergraduates.

13-00:21:23

Farrell:

So, I wanted to take the opportunity to ask you some reflective questions, and sort of looking back, as this is our last session. So, I guess starting with who do you feel has been most influential to you over the years?

13-00:21:47

Walker:

If you're looking at who made me the person that I am, that was certainly my parents and my older brother, Bob. My parents certainly shaped very much who I am and my work ethic and my ambitions. My older brother, whom I always idolized, was a kind of role model for me. I would say that the early family influences were most influential and then my brother was influential through most of my life.

13-00:22:43

Farrell:

Can you tell me a little bit more about your brother's influence? We had talked about that at the beginning, but I guess looking back and how that has continued to inform your life?

13-00:23:01

Walker:

I always wanted to catch up with him. It was a bit of a problem because he was two years older than I but he was three years ahead of me at school because when we changed schools and I was in kindergarten, and moved to the mountains, there was no kindergarten and I had to delay going to school. I think that made me feel that I had to be even more competitive with him because there was this bigger gap than there should have been. I think I learned to be a competitive person because of my relationship with my brother. I think there was a good aspect of learning to be competitive in that way. He was deeply interested in books and learning so that was a very good example and something to compete with. He became a political radical and very interested in exploring all kinds of social and economic issues. That became an interest of mine, in part because it was an interest of his. He introduced me to my first husband, so he was influential in that regard.

He was also a very caring person as he grew older and the family deafness, which my father had and both of my brothers had, and now, two of my nephews, this nerve-loss deafness may have deepened his social skills. Rather than withdrawing, as many deaf people do, he would find ways to have one-on-one conversations with people. If he was in a social group where it would

be hard for him to participate, he would take one person aside and have a good, long personal conversation with them. I learned something from observing him. I fortunately have escaped the family deafness but I think I learned a lot from him about how to behave socially. He loved the ranch, he loved the mountains, he loved going backpacking. He would go on the family backpacks. So, in addition to my children's interest in backpacking, which caused my starting to do that when I was in my sixties—he was influential in my love of the outdoors as well.

13-00:25:58

Farrell:

Your mother, when you were growing up, she really supported your involvement in different activities and she really valued education. How do you think that that has influenced you over the years or helped, I guess, inform your later work?

13-00:26:18

Walker:

I think I've talked about that a little bit. I learned from my mother that you're supposed to be involved in your community. That was what a woman should be doing. It wasn't what all the other women in the community were doing; that was what she was doing. I think that was a very important role model for me. I'm not sure that I recognized it at the time, but it was clearly something that I internalized as something very important. I look at who I am in relation to my parents and my mother, my brother, I think I'm self-confident. That was not only something I got from my parents, but I think growing up in a small town was actually very helpful. If you're a person with some smarts and some talent, if you live in a small town you have the opportunity to do things. I played the piano for every conceivable event going on. I sang for whatever performances that needed it, in churches, at funerals, at weddings. I gave piano lessons to little kids. I played for dance classes. I played and sang in a dance band. I organized things at the Youth Center at the Congregational Church. My brother and I ran a little public library in the church social hall. I entered exhibits in the County Fair. When I was in high school, I can remember feeling at one point when the principal came and asked me to do something, why is everybody asking me to do so many things?

You get a lot of confidence when people have expectations that you will perform. So I became a self-confident person. I think a self-motivated person, which I probably also got pretty much from my parents and from my brother. A fearless person, willing to challenge authority and willing to challenge conventionality. A dogged person—when I really feel strongly about something I'm not going to let it go even if I may never achieve it I'll keep working on it. I think all of those are part of who I am and I think those came from the milieu in which I grew up, which was the family, the community.

13-00:29:13

Farrell:

Is there anyone that you would identify as having been a mentor?

13-00:29:20

Walker:

On campus, Bob Kerley was certainly a mentor to me. Bob hired me, which was huge because I was a forty-five-year-old woman who had no work record. He had belief in me, but he also taught me the ways of the university, as did Ted Chenoweth, to whom I reported directly in the first couple of years that I worked for the university. Those two men were very helpful to me in the beginning of my university career.

13-00:30:01

Farrell:

What were some of the things or traits or characteristics that they had that you really admired?

13-00:30:13

Walker:

Patience, both of them, which helped me a lot as I became an administrator and had staff and people who worked under me and reported to me, and that also helped me in much of my work. Ability to listen, ability to give clear directions, they taught me how to be a manager in terms of how you relate to your staff, how you expect that relationship to work. They also gave me a huge amount of responsibility and latitude in how to accomplish my work so I learned from them to choose good people, get them started in the right direction and then trust them and give them a lot of freedom. I had to be a quick study because I was starting at middle age at a fairly high level. It was very helpful to have these people who were very experienced administrators and who had very admirable traits in terms of their administrative skills.

13-00:31:18

Farrell:

So, we've discussed some of the challenges and successes that you've had during your time in the workforce, and I think both personally and professionally. Can you tell me a little bit about how you feel—either the successes or the failures or even both—they've shaped you?

13-00:31:44

Walker:

I'm not sure that any of these successes or failures changed me, fundamentally. I think by the time I started my career at the university, I was a mature and formed person basically. It may have reinforced different parts of me, and of course, some of the learning did perhaps change me in some way. I remember talking earlier a little bit about Mike Heyman telling me I was too rational. I think that was enormously helpful advice even though I didn't think I was ever able to take it very well. He did open my eyes to the fact that one needed to be really sensitive to the emotional background to people's behaviors and to their views, that you could not assume that rationality was equally shared among all the participants in whatever controversy was going on. I think it's a little bit like the political scene, we expect rationality out of politics and it's mostly irrational, and we have to understand, what are the underlying feelings involved there? I think Mike Heyman was also an influential person because of that advice.

I got a lot of pride and satisfaction from some of the successes that I've had. The fact that I did the planning or development for more than 2,000 beds of student housing for Berkeley at a time when nobody in the community was doing any development of housing, that was a major success. I acquired at least sixty acres of new properties for the university. That was a big success, including the five-year struggle to acquire the former Schools for the Deaf and Blind, now the Kerr Campus. I think what I did in transportation for the city and for the university, was very important in terms of curbing the free flow of automobiles everywhere in Berkeley so that we now have many neighborhoods that are really protected from through-traffic that used to be completely inundated. There are lots of places on the central campus that used to have cars parked everywhere and I removed a lot of those parking lots so that now all of the areas in front of South Hall and the Bancroft Library are now car-free. North Gate used to be a big parking lot and now we have a beautiful entry there.

I consider that part of my legacy, as well as getting in place some policies that were more equitable about how parking would be distributed and encouraging the use of other modes of transportation. I feel I was successful in work I've done on both the city's plans and on the university's plans. I think some of my work helped ease some of the stress between the city and the university—stress that never goes away but is always there. Certainly our new plan for the downtown Berkeley is a big success. All of these, of course, involve the participation of other people. I couldn't have done these things without all kinds of help. In many ways I'm most proud of the merger of the two planning organizations that I talked about earlier. I truly believe that my political skills at corralling those two different boards of people were critical in getting them to decide something would not have happened if I hadn't been there. That's something that I feel was a major success. It was interesting that one of the contributors to my oral history sent me a note saying that he had contributed because I had saved the planning profession and the planning organizations. That was something I feel quite proud of.

13-00:37:20

Farrell:

Do you now see any of the challenges that you faced or encountered as successes?

13-00:37:31

Walker:

Well, I'm not sure quite what you mean by that. You mean the success because I overcame them or because I endured them?

13-00:37:44

Farrell:

I guess it's sort of open to interpretation, but I guess what I'm getting at with that is something that affected you. Yeah, so I guess maybe more that you overcame and you feel proud that you overcame. Something that was a difficult thing, but you feel good now about having—

13-00:38:09

Walker:

Most of my work was challenging in the sense that I was not dealing with things that were easy to do. I was the biggest developer for the campus in many ways so in parts of the community, I was the bad guy. I had to deal with all the resistance to change that the university was causing in a community that didn't like it, at a time when no one else was doing anything. Overcoming challenges seemed to me the name of the game. One thing I forgot to mention, in talking about things that I'm continuing to do—and this is an ongoing challenge—is my commitment to working on the issue of homelessness. I've continued to provide advice to the Berkeley Food and Housing Project, an organization that provides services in Berkeley that I greatly respect, and I made sure that the downtown plan accommodates the space for them where there's now a proposal for a development for a new center for them. That's a continuing interest of mine and issue that is certainly a challenging issue. This is not a problem that we are going to solve. It will be a continuing problem that we must continue to address. I will continue to work on that—that is one of the challenging things in our society that I feel strongly about.

13-00:40:06

Farrell:

In an ideal world, what would you like to see happen with that, or how would you like to see that handled?

13-00:40:16

Walker:

The problem of homelessness?

13-00:40:17

Farrell:

Yes.

13-00:40:22

Walker:

You want a lecture on my worldview? We have a society that tolerates incredible inequities. We have a society that has deliberately decided to starve our public sector. Since 1978, Californians have tied our own hands with Prop 13 in terms of our ability to tax ourselves and raise the money to fund the public good. The university has become almost a private institution because so little of its funds come from state sources. The first thing I would say is if we're going to really begin to solve the major social and economic issues of our time, number one, we have to have taxation policies that level the playing field. We have to have enough public monies for the kinds of public works that restore our infrastructure and provide childcare so women and men with young children can go to work and have safe and economic places to leave their children. Affordable healthcare is a first step, but it's a very weak step towards providing the kind of medical care that people need. We have to have mental health programs that help the mentally ill, who now live on our streets. We have to stop killing each other in wars, which create most of those damaged and mentally ill people who are on our streets. I'm on my soapbox, but you cannot address the homeless problem without looking at why are people homeless. We don't build affordable housing. We think the private sector will build housing for poor people. That is not going to happen. We can

require them to have some affordable units, but to expect that the private sector alone, without other financial input, is going to solve our housing problem, that is not going to happen. We have to have public monies being spent and being spent sensitively, not the way we did in the 1950s, when we built those enormous high-rises for public housing that were socially completely disruptive for poor people.

The saddest thing for me, as an eighty-four-year-old woman, is that we have been going backwards throughout so much of my life. In the 1930s and '40s, when I was a child, growing up, there was progress trying to deal with inequities in our society when we were in a Great Depression. Between the 1950s and the 1970s, we made huge progress on so many things—good jobs with living wages for blue collar people, ending legal segregation of schools, civil rights actions to support and protect the right to vote and to live where one wanted, women's reproductive rights and more. Since the 1980s, our society is becoming increasingly inequitable and the notion that there is a public good and public responsibilities has narrowed and narrowed, and we have lost ground on rights that I thought we had permanently secured. I do not believe that we are going to fix this in my lifetime. That's, perhaps, the saddest part of my life right now, is the recognition that this will never be much better in my lifetime. I can only do what I can to try to make it better.

13-00:44:07

Farrell:

Aside from this particular issue, what are some of your hopes for either Cal or the City of Berkeley as a community? What would you like to see happen or changes that you would like to see made?

13-00:44:30

Walker:

I'm worried about Cal, and in part for the reasons that I was just talking about. It's no longer a publicly-funded institution because the state is not giving it the kind of money that it needs, and it increasingly is relying on private funds. When you rely on private funds, donors begin to drive the direction of the university. I think we have a very fundamental problem in the university right now. The most graphic example to me right now is that incredibly inappropriate parking structure built by a private firm to be operated privately on Gayley Road between Bowles Hall and the stadium. That is one of the clearest examples of what is going wrong on the campus right now. Not only is the way it was constructed and way it will be operated inappropriate; the location is inappropriate. It appears as though people have lost their vision about how the campus environment ought to operate. The Aquatics Complex now proposed on Bancroft is another example of donor funding trumping a University and City plan for that area.

As a planner I have some concern about the long-term vision of the campus. The 177 acres of the core campus historically have been where all of the teaching functions have occurred. Increasingly over time as research has become more and more important we've added more and more research

facilities. As the number of students have grown and the number of staff and faculty have grown, the campus has had to keep adding new facilities. The campus now is losing the very special landscape qualities which define a campus to me. The space between the buildings is the campus, and the buildings themselves have to reside in the setting of the campus. Increasingly there's hardscape in so many parts of the campus that we're beginning to lose the sense that the buildings have an individual setting. Some are ADA requirements which don't seem to me to be executed very thoughtfully. Some of it is simply over-building of the campus.

We're now seeing more spillover of the teaching function off the campus. Some of that crossed earlier from engineering across Hearst Avenue, but it's contiguous to the campus and it's not a huge footprint. Now they are planning to tear down Tolman Hall and move Education and Psychology into permanent facilities that will be at Shattuck and Hearst, west of the new building that was just built for the British Petroleum research project. I am concerned that there does not seem to be a big picture in the long-range planning of the campus now about what should be on the central campus and what should be located on outlying properties. These are issues I certainly dealt with as a planner, but I did not have to deal with moving teaching functions off campus. I dealt with moving auxiliary enterprises, moving research, moving museums. I'm very excited that my hope for many years that the campus would move its museums into downtown and help enliven it is coming to pass and we now have the art museum about to finish construction, a really exciting project. I hope many more will follow.

The fact that the university is so starved for funds and can really only build things that private money will pay for means—this is my guess—it's not able to think as holistically as it should. To me, if we need more space than our 177 core acres can accommodate for teaching, then we should be rethinking the boundaries of the campus in some more holistic way than we're doing now. It's almost as if things are targets of opportunity rather than some really thought-out plan of how the campus is going to be over time. So, I have that major concern about the direction of the campus.

As far as the city is concerned, I am very excited about the fact that we finally, after three attempts by initiatives to overturn it, we now have the downtown plan beginning to go ahead at great speed, actually, with a number of wonderful proposals on the table. I hope that will continue. I am hoping that there will be the courage in the city to begin to address how to have the full range of housing that we need to serve the people who can no longer afford to live here, to serve homeless people who need to have houses, not just shelters. That requires not only the political will within the community to encourage and allow that to happen, but it also means finding the resources for things that the private sector will not fund. I think that's a big order, but that's something I'm still going to be working on.

13-00:51:22

Farrell:

How do you perceive the role of women in general to have changed throughout your lifetime?

13-00:51:30

Walker:

That's been a sea change. I came of age right after World War II. During World War II, many women were liberated. Men were off at war and women had to do the work. Of course the war followed ten years of Depression in which there was minimal employment, there were minimal public improvements, so by the time WW II ended our society had had more than fifteen years of deprivation, of not normal. In my most critical years in the 1940s and '50s, I think society wanted to be normal. I'm making this up, so I don't know if other people have thought about this in greater depth than I have, but it seems to me that normal was going back to some earlier time when women were in the home and the man was the breadwinner and everybody lived in a little house and the women raised the children and it was a very conventional mode of living. Which had not been the case during the war years, but I think that was the expectation at that time.

Women identified themselves by their husbands. It probably wasn't until the 1970s that I didn't use my husband's name. I was Mrs. Joe Kamiya and then, when I remarried, I was Mrs. Robert Walker. That's the way women identified themselves. Kind of amazing to look at it now. If I look at that now, if I were starting out my life now, I would be Dorothy Alford and that would be my name, and that would be who I was. I wouldn't be taking someone else's name even if I was married to them. I think I would be who I am. Women finally, in the '60s and '70s, entered the workforce not because society valued women but because society wasn't paying men enough to support a non-working person. Women going to work brought all kinds of other liberating aspects to it. Our society here has not caught up in any way with the needs of working women, in contrast to European countries, where all kinds of support service, in terms of childcare, family leave, are provided. I've already had my speech about this.

13-00:55:04

Farrell:

What are your hopes for your family in the future?

13-00:55:12

Walker:

I hope they will be happy and well. I hope we will find a way to accomplish some of our objectives for our family ranch property that will be fulfilling. We need to be able to raise money to do some projects there, so we have to figure out some way to have some more income from the ranch. That's a hope for the family. For my immediate family, I hope that these grandchildren that are on the cusp of adulthood will have fulfilling and meaningful careers and good health and much, much joy. I hope that when I'm gone, one of my children will live in my house that I helped design and that I love very much. I am leaving it to my children and I hope that one of them will be able to live here.

13-00:56:25

Farrell:

I know you wanted to add something sort of based on your written piece. Is there anything else that you wanted to say or add or sort of reflect upon?

13-00:56:40

Walker:

I think the most remarkable thing to me is how lucky I have been—really lucky. I was lucky to have good parents, I was lucky to grow up in an environment that nurtured me. I was lucky that I lived in Chicago for seven years and had an intense urban experience and had to look at social issues right up close that I had not had to deal with before. I think I was very lucky that I got involved in community issues shortly after I came to live in Berkeley, including the desegregation of schools and involvement in school affairs, and then started getting involved in planning activities. I was very lucky, but perhaps the greatest luck was the fact that I just happened to be a woman at the right time and the right place in 1975, when Bob Kerley hired me at the university. I was lucky because Bob Kerley was who he was. He was a man who did not have any advanced degrees, who could value people for what they had already accomplished and who they were, not because of their credentials.

I was very lucky because at that time the university had very few women in administrative positions and they needed to fix that. I was a woman at the right time. I was very lucky because in 1975 there was a huge fuel crisis and the university was under the gun to reduce the number of vehicle trips that were made to the campus because it was consuming scarce fuel. I was the transportation expert in my volunteer work on the Planning Commission. So, that was a very lucky coincidence. I was very lucky that Al Bowker and Bob Kerley, early in my university career evidently saw that I was making significant contributions so they invited me to sit on the chancellor's senior staff when I had only worked on the campus for two or three years. That was huge and gave me access to all of the major players at the university and the ability to be able to reach around the university and to know many people who were at the highest levels of the administration. All of that seemed to me—it was a lot of luck. It may have also been that I was performing well, but there was a lot of luck involved. I have been very grateful for all the wonderful years that I had at the university. I've loved living in the City of Berkeley with all of its shortcomings and its contentiousness. I'm happy to say that I'm a citizen of Berkeley and that I was able to have the career at the campus that was the place where my mother and her brothers graduated and where I felt very much at home.

[End of Interview]