YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Youngstown State University

Personal Experience

O H. 1904

ANN HARRIS

Interviewed

by

Kathleen Cole

on

January 22, 1998

C This is an interview with Ann Harris for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on Youngstown State University, by Kathleen Cole, on January 22, 1998, at Ann Harris's office

Could you give me some background, where you were born, your parents?

H Well, I grew up in Cleveland, Ohio, and, at the time I was growing up, I did not realize that today it would have been considered a deprived neighborhood. But, we were happy Actually, we were only two blocks from the stockyards So that gives you an idea of what type of neighborhood it was, and anything that was not nailed down was ripped off

But, I had a mother who, as she grew up, was a tomboy, and she had a great deal of influence on me because of that As a matter of fact, she was such a rebel growing up in Elyria, Ohio, which is a small community near Cleveland, that the neighborhood women actually drew up a petition and presented to my grandmother requesting that she not be seen in public wearing "knickers " [laughter] Which was a horrendous crime, you know, women wearing pants at that time And also to please restrain her daughter from climbing trees and playing baseball with the boys So that gives you an idea of the background I have a sister that is two years younger than I am, and eventually we moved over to the West Side of Cleveland off of Detroit Avenue, which is two blocks from Edgewater Beach So my sister and I, always with the dog for protection, spent a lot of hours hiking and exploring the beaches and so forth We brought back things My mother was a saint at times because we would bring back clams and we were allowed to keep them until they started smelling She had no objections to all the animals that we dragged home, and we always had pets

The reason I became a geologist was my sixth grade school teacher Miss Cushing, I will never forget her In the sixth grade, we collected minerals and rocks We made fossils out of paper mache I should say dinosaurs out of paper mache, and I was also a very avid reader At that time, we were only allowed to take out twelve books from the library So I would check out all twelve books and read them, and most of the time they got back in time

And it was not until I was in high school that I had joined the Rifle Club, and everybody was saying they could see where they had shot the targets And I could never see it I talked to my mother and she said, "Maybe we better have your eyes examined " So, when the doctor examined the eyes, he said, "You read an awful lot, do you not?" And I said, "Yes How do you know?" He said, "Well, you are so terribly near-sighted, and people that are that near-sighted is the reason that they read so much "

The one thing about reading, though, was sort of a disadvantage because I got the nickname of the walking dictionary in grade school By the time I got to high school, I outlived the walking dictionary, but because of being in the Rifle Club I was known as Annie Oakley And it took me going to college to outlive

Annie Oakley.

Although, when I went to Kent State, I had all my rifle achievement patches I was a freshman waiting in line, that whole bit there And I had my jacket with all my patches on from high school, and I heard two men arguing about something "I saw her." "No, I saw her first." An army sergeant and an Air Force sergeant walked up to me, and one of them asked, "Are those your patches or your boyfriend's patches?" I said "Well, they are mine, of course " Then, they were both giving me this spiel, how would I like to fire on the ROTC rife teams for the Army and the Air Force So I ended up, because the Army had better facilities, I ended up firing on the ROTC team Now, at that time, to fire on the team you did not have to be a member of ROTC.

C Did you join?

H No, I never joined ROTC And there was one other girl who was a good shot, Marsha Hunt And, for both the Army and the Air Force, what we would do is on the first day that the ROTC students were introduced to the rifle range, either Marsha or I would fire all four positions, and out of the 400, we would get 390 or above Then, they would tack up the targets on the bulletin board, saying, "Well this is what a couple of girls can do Let us see what you men can do " Both of them said we were the greatest incentive because these guys would kill themselves all quarter trying to beat a pair of girls

C [laughter] Did you go back during the class and help them?

H No There was no way that my parents could send me to college, and I knew that if I wanted to go to college, I would have to pay the way myself So I picked berries I was playground instructor I taught swimming lessons I was a lifeguard I worked in a department store part-time on Saturdays and Thursdays because one of the department stores were open in Cleveland Thursday nights

When I graduated from high school, I still did not have a whole lot of money saved up But, I had worked full-time at May Company, and I had a good complexion I was lucky, I never broke out So I was working the cosmetic department, and I had commented to the buyer that I wanted to go to college, but I was concerned because I was going to have to work full-time to pay my way through, and I was concerned about finding a job She said, "Well, let me talk to some of the salesmen about it because some of them go to Kent and maybe I can help you out " And I did not think anything of it after that point, but when I came to Kent, I had four hundred dollars, which at that time, this was back in 1952, quite a bit of money It was enough to pay my tuition

I entered Kent late, so I could not get into the dorm But, I bought a meal ticket at the dorm, and I got into off-campus housing. That took everything But, at least I was set for one quarter, and I started looking for work At every place,

as soon as they heard I was a college student, they were not interested "Come the holidays and stuff you are going to want off " I said, "No, I will not," and they did not believe me And I was literally down to my last dollar In fact, I was so broke that I can remember waiting in line for a PE class, and we had to put a deposit for our lock for our lockers I did not have the money The girl behind me heard, and she loaned me the money

That night, I was really discouraged and totally broke when all of a sudden the phone rang, and it was Mr Young from Thompson's Drugstore where I had been at one time But he said they were not interested [He] Called me and said, "Please come down for an interview " Unbeknownst to me, the Shulton salesmen, which makes Old Spice, had talked them into hiring me because of the buyer in Cleveland talking to him.

C Oh, wow.

H So that is where I spent the next four years I worked 48 to 52 hours a week

C While you went to school?

H. Went to school, carried sixteen hours, and after my freshman year I was married So I had those responsibilities also

C That is tough

H· Yeah, very tough

C You really earned your degree.

H At the time I went, women did not do things like that. As a matter of fact, even all through high school when I told the counselors that I wanted to be a geologist, they kept saying, "Well, you cannot do that Women do not do things like that " They tried to talk me into being a nurse, a teacher, or a social worker or a secretary. Well, I tried typing, and was hopeless When I walked into the shorthand class in high school, the teacher took one look at me and said, "You are left-handed Out! I refuse to have any left-handed people in the class because you push your pencil instead of pulling it You cannot learn shorthand " What is interesting, when I was here after I had been teaching for quite a few years, I took an aptitude test for some company who was trying to find out the personalities of the individuals that went into the various fields to see if they could find any common link When it came back, I got negative scores in secretarial work, nursing [laughter], and all the things they were trying to talk me into I scored very high on medicine and science and so forth. So I was just not fated for normal women's work

C· So you knew better than those counselors did at a very early age?

H Yeah As a matter of fact, my feelings were so strong that, when I went to my ten-year high school reunion, and the first question everybody asked me was, did I become a geologist Of course, they were all shocked to find out that I had, but that is the one thing everybody could remember about me in high school So it was a very, very strong feeling that I was going to be a geologist, and I was the second girl in the history of Kent State to get a degree in geology The first girl beat me by one quarter, Nancy Dillon When she graduated, she went to work for Timcom Bearing in the lab and never really practiced geology The only reason that we did not graduate together is one quarter it was just getting too much for me I dropped out just for spring quarter, and it was such a vacation to just work fifty two hours a week But, I was back in summer school, but that put me behind a quarter Otherwise we would have graduated together

Then, I was able to get a job at Ferro Corporation in Cleveland as a research engineer doing microscopic work, making thin sections of ceramics and analyzing them The original plans of my first husband and I were that he was going to be teaching at Hiram, and then I could work at Ferro Corporation Because of politics at Hiram and quibbling, they abolished his position So instead, we decided to go on to graduate school, and I went a semester ahead of him, because Miami was on a semester system at that time It was so nice to find out that I was not the only girl that was a geology major There were not many of us, but at least there was more than one girl in the department

When I finished at Miami, we both were interviewed by United States Geological Survey, and they wanted both of us But, they did not have any permanent positions So instead, we were transferred from one temporary position to another, and we were moved, I think it was seven times in one year We were in Newland, North Carolina, Washington, D C , Denver, Colorado We would come back and then be sent out again, and that got a little bit old

C: Was he a geologist also?

H. Yeah, I had talked him into becoming a geology major

C What was he before that?

H Well, he was in the service Actually, he is kind of an interesting person, too, because he never graduated from high school As he put it, he got accused for something he did not do for a change, and he ran off and joined the Marines They found out he was under age, and he was mustered out Then, something else happened. He joined the Air Force, and again he was underage So he mustered out Then when Korea came, they figured he had been in the service twice, he was OK, but he was one of the first ones they drafted [laughter] When

I met him, he was on a 30 day leave from Korea, close to being mustered out, and he claimed that the reason he was attracted, I was the first white woman he had seen in three years or something like that But at any rate, on our second date he tried to give me an engagement ring, which I turned down But, six months later, we were married.

I took him to the Dean of Arts and Science to see about getting him into school He had done one smart thing, he had taken a GED test He was underage You had to be 21 at that time They would not give him his score until he turned 21 But, at any rate, when Dean Raceam saw the score on his GED, it was one of the highest scores he had ever seen So he was admitted on probation, and then he made a four point that first quarter He made it through Kent in two and a half years and then Miami It took me 18 months, but he finished his master's in a year So, both of us with our degrees went off with U S G S But, he wanted to go into teaching, and he was offered a position at Superior State College I had hopes of getting something up there, but as it turned out they had very strong nepotism rules so I was not allowed to. Then we found out, after we got there, that the President, who was an ex-army colonial and ran the university like the service, he would keep people for three years because the fourth year you could get tenure and then he would not rehire you Then he would get somebody else because they were cheaper

C· Yes

H. So, after two years up there, we were looking for other work, and my first husband had applied to Youngstown State University And then a phone call from Mike Kloskeky came shortly before we were to leave, he said "I understand your wife is a geologist also " My husband said yes, and he said, "Well, how would she like to teach part time?"

C Here at Y S U ?

H Yes, here Well, see, President Jones, to make money stretch here, would hire the husband at full salary and then would hire the wife to teach "part time " Actually, we were teaching a full time load for two thousand a year

C [laughter] Was that even half salary?

H No, that was not even half salary But that is the way Howard Jones worked So we came here in 1961 At that time the geology department was one room with just a few courses in geology, and we were the department. The person that was teaching before was Lois Scutter, and her father was chairman of the chemistry department She got married, so she quit teaching, and that is the position we were filling The room, really a great number room, thirteen.

[laughter]

C A bad omen there

H· Which was in, at that time, called the Ward Beecher But later on it was known as the old section of Ward Beecher when they put the addition on to it on the first floor All the rocks, fossils, and everything had been tossed randomly into the drawers So one of our first jobs was to go sorting the stuff out to find out what we had Then, gradually, my first husband kept sneaking more and more geology courses in And the one day, he said, "We have enough for a major " So we started the battle to separate geology and geography because we were under the geography department then

C What was his name?

H Earl Harris And so that is how the geology department got started Then, gradually through the years, we added. Now when we first came here in 1961, we still had all the old World War II barracks We were on the semester system The enrollment was 5,000 students, and registration was a nightmare. I can remember they had these big cards that they had to fill out When students, I can remember students waiting in the bookstore, which as I recall is in one of the temporary halls, you know, World War II halls twenty years later And there would be lines of kids standing in the snow and the rain and everything to get their books

C· So most of the buildings on campus were not here?

H A lot of them were not, no The area between Ward Beecher, the library and so forth with all the hills, that used to be a parking lot And Jones Hall was there, the old wing of Ward Beecher, and then there was East Hall and West Hall, which were temporary barracks from World War II type of thing

C Where were those situated on campus?

H I would have to really look in an old catalog I was trying to think about that, where they were They had to be in the area near the Maag Library as I recall I would have to dig out one of the old catalogs from here The engineering building was not here at all Kilcawley was not here at all

C Did they belong to the campus?

H Yeah, it was all part of the campus, but we did not have that many buildings. Well, 5000 students. You did not need that many buildings And, at one time,

the university had an opportunity to move out to the suburbs for expansion and Howard Jones did not want to do that So that is why we have stayed down here. There used to be a house where Jones lived on campus that was on Wick Avenue And we even had classes, as we were expanding, where the business administration building sits on Lincoln Avenue. But it was a hotel there at that time and we had classes in the basement. It was a red light district upstairs [laughter]

C Figures, some of the students were getting some good education

H Oh, yeah, good education Really, at that time, our night enrollment was just as large as the daytime enrollment, and seats did not have time to get cold Classes ran from 8 00 in the morning until 10·00 at night

C· You think it was still primarily commuting?

H. Oh, definitely, very definitely That is the reason that the night school had such a large enrollment of people People would work and come here There was nothing, no dormitory space Outside of Buechner Hall, that was it You lived off campus There were not as many foreign students Practically any foreign student that was here was in the school of engineering at that time

C. Very different

H Yeah, very different at the time.

C. Did you still want to work for the Geological Service or were you interested in teaching by the time?

H My original plans were to teach all year long and then do field work during the summers It just did not work out that way. Although, frequently, my husband would go to summer institutes because NSF, National Science Foundation, had quite a few of them for geology at that time and I would be stuck with the kids My first daughter was born in Wisconsin, and then my second daughter was born in Youngstown The reason they are six years apart in age is that the second one had to be born during summer school so it would not interfere with my teaching schedule. [laughter]

C You had to really plan that one

H Yeah, we definitely planned that one because my husband and I were the department for so many years

C When did you start going full time?

H I am trying to remember what year I would have to dig through some records

C I know the book has your date about September or February, 1967

H Yeah, but that is when we became a State University and I was full time We will do it this way For many years I worked for $2000 a year Then before we became state my first husband managed to get me elevated to adjunct instructor, and my salary instantly jumped up to $5000 a year I was adjunct instructor for about two years, and then I became full-time So I have actually been teaching here since 1961 full-time As a matter of fact, I was able to prove it So I was able to buy five years of time towards my retirement because I was able to prove with my grade books that I was teaching a full-time load

C What was it like when Y S U. shifted and became a state college? Were there a lot of changes?

H It was really hectic because, first of all, we were on the semester system, and as soon as we became state, we had to change over to the quarter system It was also the first time of going from a private university to a State University Prior to becoming a State University, for example, to get any equipment they collected lab fees What you would have to do is go over to Pickard, who was in charge of the money, and literally beg and prove that your department brought in enough money to pay for that piece of equipment

C So each department basically paid for their own equipment You did not have a general fund to draw from

H No, no, no, no It was up to Pickard The school of engineering, whatever they asked for they got But the other sciences, you practically had to get down on your knees and beg the money off of Pickard

C Did engineering have the largest amount of students?

H No I am not sure what the politics were there, but whatever they wanted, they got They had equipment sometimes that they did not unpack for two or three years, but they just ordered because they could do it. Whereas all the other departments just really had to beg, and I mean that literally When we were private, it was really run by Jones and Mary Smith, relatives. A lot of neptism here and they were the ones that controlled. The first thing that we had to get used to when we became State in 1967 is we had an actual budget. We would have to figure our budget and submit it to the dean, and then we would find out

how much money we got. So it was a little game that you would have to overestimate because you knew you would be cut back, so that hopefully you would end up with what you really needed situation

C Did you start getting more equipment then?

H Yes, that it when we started getting our equipment, when we finally had a budget It made a big difference because finally we were able to buy microscopes You would have trouble even convincing them that you needed more rocks and minerals because how they consider a rock. You do not dispose of a rock Once you bought a rock, that was it [laughter]

C Go out and get some, yeah

H You did not need any more rocks This type of thing So it was so nice to be able to put things together Then, when they put the addition onto Ward Beecher, we still kept our old room, but then we had more space on the first floor, which is now where physics is located So I spent 17 years there, on the first floor there in the new section of Ward Beecher Then the university in its infinite wisdom, when they remodeled Ward Beecher, they needed more room for expansion of the departments So the rationale that we were given, since the geology department taught a single course called Geology for Engineers, we belonged in the engineering building and they were moving us out. We were not asked We were told, and the engineering department was told that we would be moving into the building and they had to make space for us Well, let me put it this way The relationship between engineering and geologists traditionally is not very smooth at all, and we were definitely resented in being here As a matter of fact, the dean, when we finally moved in, had a welcoming party with a "bury the hatchet" cake, and there was, on the cake, a hatchet [laughter] So that sort of gives you the relationship

C Did the "bury the hatchet" work?

H Yeah Especially with some of the work I was doing At that time, the Xeroxing machine was out in the hallway, and the engineers would see all of the stuff that I was Xeroxing and so forth and get into conversations So gradually things smoothed over The one thing that took over in my career was, first of all, I had in 1975 a student stopped me in the hall. I should say in 1974 a student stopped me in the hall and had been traveling out west and been to some of the national parks and started asking me about the geology of the national parks We really did not have any information, and I thought, "Gee, that really would not be a bad course to teach " So I went to talk to John Loch and made the suggestion to teach it under continuing education, that we try it out there first So we offered it

a few times under continuing education. It was so popular that we decided to make it part of the regular curriculum

Then I started looking for a book for the course, I discovered there was not any textbooks out on geology of national parks So I had talked to several book salesman, and Kendall Hunt said, "Well, why do you not do this under our private publishing plan You can kind of get your lecture notes together, and we will publish it just for here." That sounded like a pretty good idea So I literally threw together my notes in one summer and had signed a contract I sent the manuscript in About a week later I get a phone call from Kendall Hunt He said, "We are sending you another contract " And I said, "Why?" He said, "Well, decided to go nationwide because there were other schools asking for a book like this " And I said, "Well, you cannot I just threw this thing together " He said, "It does not make any difference We will get it out and beat the competition, and then you can sit down and start writing the next edition." When the first edition came out, there were errors One picture was in there twice Another picture was upside down We got the photographs from the Geological Survey so late that we did not even have time to label them So they were unlabeled, but we made the market I sat down and wrote the second edition. So the first one came out in 1975. The second one came out in 1977, and in 1977 something else also happened.

Joyce Tanner, who lived on Hilda Avenue, went to work one day. Her kids and some neighborhood kids were shooting baskets on the hoop over the garage door, and they heard a loud noise and a whooshing sound It scared them, and they ran off They came back a little bit later, opened the garage door to get something, and the garage floor was missing in this 20 by 20 garage. So they called their mother at work and said, "Mom, the garage floor is missing We cannot see the bottom of the hole " She did not really believe them 100 percent, but they finally convinced her something was wrong So she left work early, parked in the driveway, lifted up the garage door, took a horrified look and called the fire department Chief O'Nesti, Charles O'Nesti, the one that is in all the trouble with Trafficant, came out. He took a look at it, scratched his head, and he called Carmen Conglose, the city engineer, to take a look.

Well, it just so happens that I was on a committee with officials for the city of Youngstown, along with John White and Carl Chuey, for the Environmental Review Committee, and I had to go down and pick something up from Conglose's office He said, "Say, Ann, would you mind taking a look at that hole in that garage on Hilda Avenue?" "Oh, sure " And as soon as I saw it, I knew immediately what it was. It was a mine shaft from a coal mine, and that is how I got started in that It perked my curiosity, so I was trying to find out everything that I could on the mine I tried to get my fellow faculty members interested in it, but since it did not pay anything, they were not interested So I just continued to do the work on there Now I have been involved in the abandoned coal mine problem and over 20 years and am considered as an expert on it

C Dr Drobney said that you have all kinds of fascinating things at home [laughter]

H Oh, yes, I know.

C· Tell me about it What kind of stuff do you have?

H Well, have you been to the Steel museum?

C· Yes

H· If you take that spiral staircase down, you go downstairs, and you see all that coal-mining equipment displayed I donated everything

C Where did you keep it before it was in the museum?

H At home [laughter] A little bit here, but most of it was kept at home, and my husband and I would go to flea market sales and this type of thing As things were falling in, I would go out, and I would be talking to some of the old timers They had equipment, and they gave it to me because they knew when they died that their kids would consider it junk and just throw it out. As a matter of fact, one of the mine bank cars that I had acquired was in Nashonnock township over in Pennsylvania, and the fire department, the fire chief and some of the men, even helped me carry it and load it up in my husband's truck Nashonnock township has quite a few coal mines Even the high school sits on one The city building, the fire department, all sit on it Of course they are expanding, and there are some major concerns for very good reason about where a lot of the homes are being built. A couple of unscrupulous people I occasionally run into Most contractors are honest, but there is always a few that do not care

There was a situation over there A young couple bought their first home, and along their back lot line, there was a lot of brush their contractor was supposed to clear and never would clear Then, all of a sudden, a hole fell in about ten feet from the house in their back yard, and you could see the mine tunnel That is when we found out that the reason the contractor had put the brush there was to hide the subsidence pits that were on the lot. Then the couple found out, when they tried to get back to him, that in buying their first house, you know, you sign anything that is put in front of you, and they had signed a statement saying that he was not liable for any damage done to their property due to mine subsidence

C So they were stuck with it

H Yeah, they were stuck with it

C What do you do in a case like that? Is there something you can do?

H Well, eventually, they just declared bankruptcy and let the house go back They had no choice But this guy said, you know, he knew the mines were there He did not care These mines were quite shallow there.

C Can you go in and fill them up?

H· Yeah, there is all different ways that they can be filled up In fact, one of the things that I did was I discovered there was no subsidence insurance in Ohio, and I had talked to several legislators Harry Meshel made promises but never did anything I was doing work for an attorney on mine subsidence problems in East Liverpool, and he said, "Why do you not go talk to Joe Vukovich? He is a friend of mine, and I will let him know you are coming " That was Jimmy Pazol Pazol of Anzollotti, Sperling, Pazol and Small, the firm I talked to Joe, and he was very interested in it Really, he and his staff worked very, very hard to get the subsidence insurance. The first time it died in committee, and so he did not give up He tried again, and this time he figured, "Well, that committee, the members of that committee, are going to have to see how it affects people "

So he arranged, down in southern Ohio, where people were impacted by their homes, retired couples building their dream homes and all of a sudden their basement wall collapses in and everything He arranged for a tour with the insurance people because it was going to be under the Ohio Fair Plan After they took a look, I talked to one of them One of the members was a woman She said when she went home that night she could not sleep because she felt so guilty about helping to kill the bill the first time Here is a picture of me and Ella McBride, who also had all kinds of problems, -- she lives in Mineral Ridge -- sitting next to Governor Celeste when he signed the subsidence insurance bill

C· What year was that?

H I am trying to remember now That had to be in the late 1980's I have been involved in this for 20 years and, truthfully, I lose track. I have records that I can dig through and eventually find the date Joe Vukovich and I, they had meetings in some of the different parts of the state that had major problems, and I was invited to be at all of them. But, because of my teaching schedule, I could not be at all But, I was at some, and I was at the one in Stuebenville Joe Vukovich was introduced as the father of the bill Then Joe came up, and he said, "If I am the father of the mining bill, then Professor Harris here is the mother " [laughter] But he said, "Only in the literal sense!" [laughter]

C So have you been down in a lot of the coal mines?

H Yeah, I have been in some of the mines Now, most of the mines around here you cannot get into because they are below the water table But, there are some mines, particularly down in Columbiana County, that have been open Any mine I have crawled through usually several generations of kids have crawled through first In some situations, such as one off of Web Road in Austintown, was really a dangerous situation. So sometimes, as far the kids were concerned, I was a "meanie" because I got their favorite playing place sealed off. I would rather do that rather than find out that some kid was killed in one of these mines I have done interesting things in Washingtonville The mayor at that time had me in his back yard. It was an air shaft, and to really see the air shaft, they had modified clam buckets So we had like a little steel elevator cage, and the mayor and I went down the air shaft, lowered down into it, to see what there was to see

C. You do not suffer from claustrophobia, I take it?

H No, no [laughter] Definitely not, because a lot of these mines are only about three feet high There is that one in Webb Road that I was talking about I am sitting in there That was a Vindicator photographer that took that picture In the picture up there, that was taken by Odea Aduma Odea and I got to be pretty good friends because of the work on the mines, and he is an amateur photographer, which I did not know So, one day on his day off, he said, "Let us go mine hunting " Then he was taking pictures It was even raining that day, but he was a real good sport about it

C How did you become interested in dinosaurs?

H Dinosaurs was the sixth grade teacher, and it never died.

C So you were interested in dinosaurs?

H Well, of course. That was one of the reasons that I decided I was going to become a geologist, because of my interest in dinosaurs

C Have you gone out west and dug up fossils?

H About four years ago, I got to go on a Chatauqua summer institute with Mike Parish, who is a well-known, really great paleontologist The "Paleobiology of Dinosaurs," so we visited sites We learned all about the dinosaurs and visited some of the famous quarries where the dinosaurs were taken out in Colorado and Utah I remember one day it was over 100 degrees outside, and I am walking along a dry stream looking for little pieces of dinosaur bone wondering, "What am I doing here?" But, I still thoroughly enjoyed the dinosaurs After all these years, I finally managed to get a dinosaur class into the regular curriculum

I have taught it once, and again spring quarter I am supposed to teach it for the second time

C What would you say are the advantages and disadvantages about being a woman in this field?

H Disadvantages, I was not considered as having any brains for the first 17 years that I was teaching here until I got involved in the mines. Even the fact that I wrote a textbook, which, by the way, is in its fifth edition and sold in a good majority of the national parks, used all over the United States and in Canada, but that really did not hold too much water at all I think it is because it was a woman type thing. It was only my involvement in the mines that I was proving a lot of the officials wrong that I finally got recognition that maybe I have some intelligence

C Are there any advantages?

H Not too many [laughter] Quite seriously, you know, because even when I was hired at Ferro Corporation, just being a mere woman I received $2000 less a year than the guys did At that time, the salary I received was $5000, which was considered as really big money, and that was more money than my father ever made in his lifetime per year So the only reason I was able even to be hired by the university is because they hired my husband Otherwise they would not have touched me

C Is your husband deceased, or are you divorced?

H When my textbook became popular, that kind of started a split towards us And then, every time he picked up the newspaper or turned on the television or turned on the radio, my name was on it because of the work of the mines That kind of finished it. But, we got a dissolution after 26 years of marriage, very amiable In fact, even today on the holidays he comes over and my daughters come over for dinner We celebrate Christmas together We exchange gifts for birthdays One time Dale and I went to Denver for a Geological Society America meeting Earl came along with us and, while I was attending the meetings, the two of them went on field trips together and people could not believe it [laughter]

C That is a little unusual [laughter]

H Yeah, we definitely all get along together I met my second husband doing consulting work for his company, and we literally spent about six months climbing up and down high walls and crawling through coal mines together So he knew what he was letting himself in for at the time that we got married I still, not as much now, but I have spent Christmas vacations standing next to a drilling

rig test drilling for coal mines Beautiful weather, there is snow flying around you, mucking in the mud up to your ankles A lot of students think it is glamorous work, but they do not realize all of the hard work behind it

C Since you had come to Y S U because of your first husband, after the divorce, did you consider leaving teaching at the time?

H No There was some concern in the department because at that time, I think he was still chairman at that time, and then he was no longer chairman. There was a little bit of concern that there might be, you know, fighting in the department, but there never was. So that concern went away very, very rapidly [tape stops]

C Have you ever thought of doing something else?

H. No, definitely stay teaching because it gives me an advantage It opens a lot more doors for me I have access to a lot more things, and I have got the best of two worlds I am a certified professional geologist, so I do consulting work So I am actively involved in doing geology during the summers Frequently I am involved in consulting work, again, or I get to do interesting things Two years ago, with the University of Illinois I went on a ten-day rafting trip through Canyonlands National Park It was a white water rafting trip for five days on the Colorado and Green River, and then we went to Glen Canyon north of the Grand Canyon, Zion Canyon and Bryce Canyon. I have also, and this is through John Loch in Continuing Education, through the TraveLearn program as a faculty advisor for trips to the Inside passage to Alaska So I have been up to Alaska four times for a two week tour, and basically, for being a mother hen for a group of people and giving three or four lectures of the geology of Alaska, I get a free trip.

C Oh, my [laughter]

H So on these trips I have taken plane rides over glaciers and helicopter rides I have landed on glacier I have gone rafting in Keystone River and all kinds of things up there. This is material that I bring back to the classroom to use in teaching. And then also, I talked Dale into going to Hawaii Actually, I had to do a little maneuvering, and his bosses threatened him if he did not go to Hawaii And that was with Bob Corbett, where I went on the Canyonlands trip We went over to Hawaii for about two weeks and saw the geology there My husband liked it so much once I dragged him there He is a homebody The second time I said, "Why do we not go to Hawaii?" He said, "OK " So we went on our own One of the nicest things was the helicopter trip over Pu Hu o' o', which is one of the main vents of Kiluaua Because I was a geologist, the helicopter pilot that usually does not fly over them so that you could see did, and I could see the lava

lake in Pu Hu o' o' and the crust Then we flew over the community of Kalapana that has been buried by lava flows, and the most stark memory I have is seeing half of a satellite dish sticking up out of the lava flow and knowing, you know, that they were homes and everything underneath there

C Sort of nature versus technology

H Right, and again, all this comes back and gets incorporated into the national parks textbook and slides for class and so forth. It gives me opportunities to do things in the summer and then be able to bring it back Just like my dinosaur thing I am allowed to indulge in my dinosaur collection, and I have one of those big double-door cabinets made out of metal like filled with dinosaur stuff, plus two bookshelves up to the ceiling that are all in boxes and dinosaur stuff When I teach historical geology and, of course, the dinosaur class, I am dragging all this stuff out to use in the class I am content with this

I am still involved professionally I am the Chair of the Screening Committee for certification of geologists in Ohio for American Institute of Professional Geologists So I still keep in touch with my professional buddies Usually, every single year I give a paper at the Ohio Academy of Science meetings So I keep active that way Then again, it keeps me in touch with all other geology faculty members and so forth. So I think I have the best of both worlds in consulting and in teaching

C Do you ever think that someday you will retire and just forget all of it or keep going until you cannot do it?

H Well, John Q. Public will not let me forget As a matter of fact, this afternoon I am having a meeting with a gentleman from the Liberty Historical Society They are having their hundredth or some anniversary, and he is coming to get information on the mines in Liberty township and also wants me to be a speaker at one of the meetings A few years ago, I gave an average of one talk a week, but I have gradually pulled back from that because that gets pretty tiresome I have other things to do, but I am still spending weekends doing work on the mines or schoolwork Evenings, almost every night, my husband complains In fact, he has threatened to move a cot into here so I can just spend all my time down here.

C Do you see more women going into geology, or is it still mostly men?

H. Definitely No, the ratio now is about 50/50 It has been a long hard pull, but the women are proving that they can hold their own In fact, really, it is still somewhat of a situation You have to be twice as good to get half the credit. Being a woman at the time I went to graduate school, they were trying to steer

me into doing paleontology or something where I could stay in a nice safe laboratory all the time So my thesis was a field structural geology thesis in the Catskill Mountains

C [laughter] Sort of deliberately?

H Oh, definitely Definitely the rebel I did not want to fit that pattern and, even today, the only reason I am teaching paleontology is by default When my ex retired, he was the paleontology teacher and there was not anybody else to teach the class I love to collect fossils I hate to identify them but I love to collect them [laughter]

C What changes has Y S U made on you?

H They have given me a lot of confidence When I first came here, I was very meek, mild, Miss Milktoast person Part of that was the textbook, and then getting involved in the mines, and I started getting recognition So today I have tremendous amount of confidence that I did not have Of course, things have changed so much When I first came to Youngstown, there was a dress code for faculty, and the only women that were allowed to be seen in pants were the H P E teachers when they were teaching the sports But, otherwise, because that was Dean Painter at that time, we had a very, very strict dress code that you had to wear When pantsuits came in, she was absolutely horrified, but she finally had to give in and the women faculty were finally allowed to wear pantsuits When Dean Painter left Y S U , then the dressing code got a lot more casual.

C So you were even taking students out in the field What were you supposed to wear?

H. They would allow us to wear jeans when we took them on field trips. That was the exception and, of course, when we first came here, everything was a tea We always had teas for everything, and we had to chaperone all the dances, all the fraternity dances and stuff like that My husband was the advisor for the Sig Ep's [Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity], and we would practically go deaf. [laughter] Those were things I was glad to see go, the relaxed dress code, that we did not have to chaperone everything. I learned to drink tea I do not drink coffee yet, but I learned to drink tea because we had to go to all those stupid teas all the time

C What things are you sad to see that Y S U has changed through the years?

H. They are getting very impersonal Nothing that happens here surprises me

anymore I have gone through centralization, decentralization, centralization, decentralization. Semester system to quarter, and I am really not very happy about going back to the semester system again because I have been through the semester system There is going to be some shocked faculty when they find out about their increased teaching load, and they are thinking, "Well, this is going to make it easier for me " No, they are going to have a lot more work on the semester system It is going to be hard on the geology department because on the quarter system we have been able to offer a variety of courses

We have a very, very strong undergraduate program because we do not have a graduate program here Our students, the graduate schools love to see our students coming there because they have a very, very strong background The best way to show how strong it is, on more than one occasion, our students are required to go to summer field camp On more than one occasion, they have won the award as being the best field camp student in the entire United States Our students have found that when they go to field camps where they are meeting students from other schools and so forth, they finally appreciate the education that they have gotten from Youngstown because they find that they are much better prepared than a good majority of the other schools And that includes the big name schools like Ohio State and Princeton and so forth

C· So you do a real good job of educating?

H· Yes, we do a good job educating, and now we are being pulled away from that Sometimes we are spending more time in committee meetings than we are in teaching, and I think that is sad because we are supposed to be here to teach instead of doing all this other committee work So much of it is nothing but busy work

C Do you think that Y S U switching to semesters is going to impact the number of courses?

H Oh, yeah What courses are we going to eliminate, or how can we combine courses together? We may be forced, instead of offering courses every other year so that students can get out of here in four years, we may have to offer them every three years because we do not have the staff to offer everything We have a heavy teaching load here in the geology department When the former Dean, before Brothers, came from Engineering and Math Department, he was always complaining that we offered more than 90 hours of geology and we were only a five person department Ben Yazwiak

C So, on average, about how many courses a quarter do you teach?

H Usually three Invariably, at least one of them is a lab course So that takes

additional time

C How many students are geology majors, usually?

H It varies We have a B.A in geology and a B S in geology and also a degree in earth science Now the environmental studies is combined with us also In the field of geology, things rise and fall We have had as high as 60 majors and as low as 15 majors Now we are on the rise again We went through one episode where all the oil companies were laying off their geologists, and Dr. Beiersdorfer and Dr Dick are good examples of retrenchment because they both worked in the oil industry for awhile But, they could see the handwriting on the wall and got into teaching Now there is a demand because of the energy problems for oil geologists So it is having a big boom. As a matter of fact, one of our students with just a bachelor's degree went down to Houston He is working for a small oil company, hired at $42,000 a year for a starting salary

C That is pretty good with just a bachelor's.

H Yes, because we are very honest with our students We tell them that they really have to plan on a master's degree in geology unless they want to be a gopher for the rest of their lives Go for this, go for that type thing And some of our students did not want to believe us, but they found out after working for a year or two that we were right So they would go back to graduate school, fortunately, and get their degree Sometimes I get a lot of satisfaction out of the students. You know, teacher knows best. The classical example is when we were a private school, we really did not have a true geology major at that time

One student did not quite get his degree. He went, left school, got a job with the U.S. Geological Survey in oceanography After he was almost blown off of the ship in the Sea of Japan during a typhoon, he decided oceanography was not for him [laughter] He came back to finish his degree, which we had at that time By the time he came back, we had the degree One of the courses that he had to take was optical mineralogy. Well, he did not want to take it, and he was given his choice, take it or not graduate He came in every day to class and bitched, just complain, complain, complain

Now, one of the requirements for the class -- it is part of the final exam -- is they have to make two thin sections of rock, one by machine and one by hand, and analyze them That is part of their final So when he graduated, he went back to U S G S and one of the first questions they asked him is, "Can you make thin sections of rock?" And he said, "Yes " Next thing he knew, he was thin-sectioning moon rocks He even discovered a new mineral in the moon rocks, and he was doing work with the electron microscopes in there. [laughter] So, you know, teacher really did know best He spent much of his life doing that type of work, and then U S G S laid back with one of the budget cuts That is

the problem with the Geological Survey or any of the state surveys in geology What do those eggheads know? They forget we are the ones that say, "Well, it is safe to build here," and so on and so forth But anyway, then he went to work for Coors labs and did a lot of work, microscopic work and so forth, for Coors, and they just recently discontinued the lab So he came back to this area, and now he is working for a company in similar work But, it has always been microscopic work [laughter]

C So that gives you a thrill, to know that you were right about that

H Right, teacher really does know best, and we are a close community Students, when they are in the area, stop in to see us Every once in a while, I will get some interesting rock sample or something in the mail A student is someplace, "Oh, Professor Harris would like that " And they mail that to us, and you do not have that closeness with your students in a lot of the fields Every time they are back, they have got to stop by for a while and just say hello and let us know what they are up to Once in a while, I will get a phone call I got a phone call from one student quite a few years ago He went to work for a company, and next thing you knew he was in charge of setting up a lab for identification of minerals So I get a phone call, "What do I need? Where do I buy it?" [laughter] They come back to us for advice, and that is one of the nice parts about teaching, that you get to see the students go off as students and they are making a success for themselves We still keep in touch

C What would you say are the disadvantages of teaching?

H Disadvantages of teaching Writing up new lectures I think I hate finals more than the students do. [laughter] I am serious I probably spend more time in making up exams, putting lectures together, grading exams, than most of the students do in studying My courses are not stagnate They are always changing I am always looking for new material. I am always updating the material So I spend an awful lot of hours My average day here is a nine hour day, and then I take work home in the evenings And that is the one disadvantage because I care about the students I can remember going to college I had one professor that he gave oral exams, and the exams were so old He kept them in his wallet folded up, and he had to keep Scotch taping the test together He knew all the answers were out, but his philosophy was, "At least they are going to learn what I want them to learn" type thing But, he never changed in decades literally, and I vowed at that time I was never going to be that type of teacher So that is the reason I am going through these articles, because I try to keep the courses up to date. Geology does not stay the same. It changes

C All kinds of new inventions.

H New concepts, the theory of plate tectonics has changed geology totally They are making new discoveries all the time about the dinosaurs The big controversy is are the dinosaurs ancestors of the birds? Were they warm-blooded or cold-blooded? So things do not stay the same So that is one disadvantage, if you want to be a good teacher, is trying to keep up to date because it would be so easy to use the same old notes, the same old exams, and I cannot do that

C In order to get your information, do you use the Internet and all of the computer stuff now?

H I do not have the time, and I had to learn computer on my own But, I am glad for computers because if my living depended on my typing I would starve to death When I had to type, my average rate was two correction ribbons per typewriter ribbon [laughter] Computers have made my life much, much easier, but I have learned most of my computer through my students You notice I have a student assistant He has helped me more When I started with computers, a student helped me It was a Commodore because that was all I could afford, and it was also an easy computer language to learn So Ted has weaned me from the Commodore and gotten me into one of those, and has taught me how to do all kinds of things. The work on the mines, that is all being put into a computer database, all the information on the mine inspector reports That is another thing that I do I collect all old publications that I can dig up, and I have almost a complete collection of the mine inspector reports for Ohio since 1874. I am only missing two years All that material, wherever I can finagle funding or student help some way, is gradually being put onto a computer database, and all of this is going to go over to the Historic Preservation Center

C Dr. Drobney mentioned that a lot of your stuff eventually was going to go over there

H Yeah, when I retire Quite truthfully, with all of this committee stuff and all of this other garbage and going back to the semester system, retirement is looking a lot better to me Then I will have space there and I can just spend all my time working on the information from the coal mines. Train people to do the work that I am doing because there is not anybody else doing this work The state hates to admit it, and the federal government, but when they really need any information on a mine, they have got to come to me to get that information I want that to be so other people can be trained to do this, and Historic Preservation is going to be the perfect situation over there. We want to get the mine maps and stuff onto the G I S system I want to get the mine maps

digitized and onto computers I have so many old records I have some original mine maps that are on a semipermanent loan to me Maps that were the pencil drawings from the surveyors of the 1800's That all should be preserved, and there is no one in the department here that is interested in it If I were to retire and die, all that information would be lost. So, you know, the Historic Preservation Center is just perfect for this type of thing because students can be trained and the records will still be available to the public and I can still work there at my leisure

C So you still want to keep your hand in it?

H Oh yeah, very, very definitely I am not just going to drop everything and forget that I was ever at Youngstown State Now this is my 37th year of teaching here What really is getting me tired is all this other garbage, all the committee meetings and all this stuff It is discouraging I am here to teach, not to sit in committee

C So you would rather just do the teaching and let somebody else do the committee work?

H Absolutely. Definitely I even had a chance to become a chairman I said, "No, thanks " I did not want to put up with all that garbage I feel sorry for our chairman because some days he does nothing but go from meeting to meeting to meeting It is ridiculous

C What advice would you give a new student who is considering geology as a major? How would you convince them that geology is the way to go?

H It is a great major because you get a chance, if you want to, to go out of doors If you do not want to, if you want to stay buried in the lab all the time, you can I know one geologist. He is excellent in doing x-ray work and everything If you show him a photograph of an x-ray of a mineral, he can identify it immediately If you hand him the real mineral, he would not know what you are handing him You have so many possibilities because the term geologist is just like the term doctor There are so many different specialities that you can go into, and for women in particular, the doors are wide open now. You do not have all the barricades. When I applied at Ferro Corporation, for example, the way the interviewers got around it was, "Well, we do not have any restrooms for women " And I would smile sweetly and say,"Well, where do your secretaries go?" And then it is, "Uh, uh, uh," and they would change the subject So there was a lot of discrimination at the time that I went into the field, and all the way through, they were trying to discourage me because that was not ladylike

Now you do not have that situation for the girls. We have proved that we

do a good job. In some things we do a lot better job than the men do because we are a lot more patient than males are They are not willing to sit behind a microscope and pick through trying to locate fossils, or count mineral grains and stuff like that Whereas a woman has had to learn to be very patient, and they are more willing to do stuff like that But now, if they want to do field work, they are allowed to do field work There is not the discrimination As an undergraduate student, we went on one field trip The guys got to go down the mine, but I had to stay on the surface because I was a female And the reason was that the miners were superstitious that a woman in a mine would bring bad luck

C I have heard that before.

H Well, I have got an interesting story One gal -- this is back in the 1970's -- was hired by the Greek government, and she had to go into a lot of the mines There is part of her job. So they had to let her in, and she discovered, after her tour, so the miners would not go on strike, after she left, a goat was slaughtered and its blood was sprinkled throughout the mine to purify it before the miners would go back in [laughter]

C And this was in the 1970's?

H Yes, this was in the 1970's

C. Poor goat [laughter]

H Yes, she felt sorry that she was responsible for the death of so many goats. They started letting women into the mines when mining was in their heyday But unfortunately, when things were cut back, of course, they did not have the seniority so they were the first ones laid off So you find very few miners But even today, there are still some old timers that really resent women In some of the consulting work, I was doing environmental impact statements for the strip miners. On more than one occasion, especially if the guy was over 50, I remember the one guy saying, "Well, you are doing a man's job so I guess I should shake your hand like a man " He really resented the fact that I did the work, but his license to strip mine, his permit to strip mine, depended on my report [laughter] It was a hard pill for him to swallow So I still run into it a little bit today, but because of my work in the mines, I have finally been accepted

C Do you think that, if someone is going into geology, are there certain specialities in geology that are less tolerant towards women?

H Not as much anymore Environmental geology has opened up a lot of fields for

the women because they find that women are very good in this very fine, detailed work that frequently has to be done About the only place, I would say really, is out on the oil rigs That would be a major problem there But as far as being on land, that is not as much of a problem anymore Surprisingly enough, it has been the state surveys and the federal surveys that have been more advanced in putting women out into the field in the early days than private industry was

C There would probably have more anti-discrimination laws on the federal level

H Yes But even before you had all of those discrimination laws, they were more willing to put women out into the field before you had all these laws that required them to do it That is why a lot of women went into the surveys and even in the teaching field I remember Jane Forsythe She originally worked for the geological survey, and the head of the survey at that time hated women geologists She just finally got so tired of the discrimination that she went into teaching, and she finally retired from teaching at Bowling Green She was very upset because they forced her out when she was 70. [laughter]

C. Let me ask sort of a chance to brag, what would you say that your impact on Y S U has been? We talked about Y S.U 's impact on you What do you think your impact on Y S U has been?

H. Well, first of all, the best way I can put it There was a comment that I was on television when the mines were really falling in more than the president of the university was I made a lot of people aware of the university A lot of people for the first time learned that there was a geology department at the university and that they could have some local experts because the definition of an expert is somebody who does not live there. You have to bring an expert in from outside, never your own people I think I have helped in that respect that companies are a little more willing now to come to the university for help than go someplace else So I think I have had some impact that way

C Anything else you want to brag about while you have the chance here? [laughter]

H· No. I get razzed a lot because of being the only female faculty member in the department I have the messiest office, so I have a sign "If a cluttered desk means a cluttered mind, what does an empty desk mean? It is thought that Y S U is no better than other schools are In fact, in many respects, they are a lot better It was nice to see Y.S U develop to a state university because finally the departments were able to get equipment The part that bothers me about Y S U is there is money for the football players, there is money for athletes, but the department does not have enough money to hire students to help us I really

resent that (noise on tape, tape ends)

End of Interview