

Interview With Jean Bain

This is Lee Bahrych coordinator of the Colorado Legislative Oral History Library. The date is February 24, 1995 and I'm interviewing Former Representative Jean Bain. The interview is being conducted at her home in Denver at 755 Gaylord Street.

L.B. Jean I really appreciate your spending the morning with me and I'd like to start out by asking you about your family history and about your education.

J.B. Sure, My paternal grandparents came to Denver in 1870. They were children and came separately with their families. My grandma and grandfather were married in 1882, I think, so we've lived here ever since, as a family. Two of the houses in the historic 9th Street Park in Auraria campus were my, one house was my great grandparents and the other house my grandparents. So we've lived here practically in the same neighborhood ever since and I went to Morey and I went to East High School and I went to the University of Colorado and after I graduated there I went back to, probably the finest secretarial school in the world in Boston, Katharine Gibbs. Which is where I learned many skills that I have, bookkeeping, business, all kinds of things. They stood me in good stead the rest of my life. I had no desire to be a teacher or a nurse which at that time were your choices for girls. So that was it. Then I married and had two boys. My husband went off to the war, World War II that is. He was gone 6 years, I raised the boys.

After the war was over, we decided that, my husband had been in Europe in the war, and after the war had ended, you know when VE day came, he spent maybe four or five months where they gathered the people and put them in displaced person camps. We decided after the war that maybe it was our duty to help with the peace, so we, through Lawrence Martin at the Denver Post and the United Nations adopted a child who was a displaced person. We brought her here. She came finally in 1951 so we adopted her and raised her too, so we had three children. Our older son is, at the present time, the state chairman of the Republican party. Our second son is a research engineer and last year received the Leonardo DaVinci award for being a special engineer for Rockwell International where he works. We have six grandchildren. One's married so we count her and we have seven. I think maybe the other interesting thing about my background, I had only a brother, I had only sons, I have five grandsons, and one granddaughter, so my life has been primarily associated with men rather than women. I think that was what helped me with being in the legislature and working only with men. I believe that to be true, looking back now.

How did I happen to run for the legislature? It would have been the farthest thing from my mind to ever do, but one summer evening, a Sunday evening, it was just a week before the convention on the following Saturday, the telephone rang and a man asked me if I would consider running for the legislature, the House of Representatives. I said heavens no. Ask me to go to the moon it wouldn't have been any farther. I left the phone went back into the

kitchen, we were washing the dishes. I told my husband what the telephone call had been about. He said why don't you do it. Well, we just laughed and giggled and laughed. The man on the phone had said if you change our mind let us know. So my husband went back to the phone and called them and said yeah she'll run. Well we still laugh, I think we laughed on the rest of the night, I had no vague idea what we were getting into. The next day when I was having some friends for lunch the telephone rang all morning, the telephone rang all afternoon. I was afraid to tell anybody what it was about. When they called they said you have to get your picture taken right away, you have to write an article for the newspaper, you have to get somebody to nominate you for the convention, you have to get a convertible car with your name on the side to ride in the parade Saturday morning down to the auditorium, on and on like that and I'd say yes and hung up, then it would ring again.

L.B. You didn't even have a committee or anything

J.B. Oh, I didn't have anything, like I have now, nothing. All I could picture later on, they were in the basement of the Shirley Savoy on the corner of Seventeenth and Lincoln, I don't know who the men were except Bob Lee was the chairman, but I don't know who the other men were. Now why did they call me. I had, right after the war I had joined the League of Women Voters so I'd had some relationship with that interest. My family had always been Republican, just had always been, just always were. You just voted Republican and that's what you did. My husband had run for the school board three times and gotten elected so his name had been on the ballot although not on the general ballot, just the school ballot which was a small area, which wasn't much. The other thing was my name began with "B" and we were on the ballot alphabetically then and so if my name had begun with "S" I probably wouldn't have had a chance. But since I was "B" that was good. That was a positive. I did all the things they told me to. I was afraid to tell my mother because ladies didn't do this kind of thing and we were ladies in my family. So I didn't tell her till later on in the week just before it came out in the newspaper so she'd know it before she saw it. My, our boys were both off on summer jobs so I dare write them and told them, I was sure I felt they'd all think I'd lost my mind and maybe I had. We did get the car, I said, "I don't ride on the backs of convertibles, I'm no Miss America." Marilyn Vanderberg grew right here on the corner with our boys and she'd been Miss America within a year or two previous. Ed Morrow had come and done that show that he did with that great TV tower out in the alley, I was very conscious of Miss America. They said "oh yes you do." I did, I rode down 16th Street Saturday morning, there isn't a soul on 16th on Saturday morning we just rode down the parade, rode down to where the Temple Buell theater and that arena, where that was. I had gotten, oh yes, you had to get someone to nominate you. So I had gotten Don Stubbs who I had known in school, and all his life too and been a good Republican. I felt that somebody who's nominating me should be somebody who honestly knew me, who knew me as a person, so I got nominated and we, Jack Airhardt I think was the name of the man who was manger, I think there was 18 of us that ran in Denver .

L.B. I think you're right, 18 representatives from Denver at that time

J.B. I'm sure to make out the ticket, they could find 8 or 10 young attorneys, young eager, enthusiastic young men who wanted to run. But then they had to find a Jewish person, a

Catholic person, a Black person, token people, including a woman, and I was the token woman. I often heard them say one woman is OK but that's enough. I took that, I understand that, it doesn't bother me. So we ran, that was Saturday. Jack Airhardt said to me Monday night, we're having a meeting at a hotel, I don't remember the name of the hotel. The man who managed the hotel was one of the candidates of our 18 so we were going to meet at his hotel. I said, whatever the name of the hotel was like, Barclay, I said where's the Barclay, He said I don't know so I came home and looked it up in the phone book and found out it was on lower 17th street so I called Jack and he said I'm not going down to lower 17th Street, you didn't go down below Daniels and Fisher in those days. I said I'm not going. He said yes you are, I'll come by and pick you up. So I went down there and we went to this old hotel. In the lobby men were all sitting around watching a TV high up in a corner. We got in one of those iron elevators went up a floor or two walked down the length of the hall to the far end with men peeking out the doors to see who's walking down. We met in a room down at the end, and while we were sitting there, one of the men would nod his head and tip it over toward the bathroom. I'd shake my head no, I didn't want to go to the bathroom. When he'd get my eye again he'd nod his head and tip it over toward the bathroom again. I found out later there was beer or something in the bathroom. He was trying to invite me, be hospitable with them. Well we never met there again. But that introduced me to the world of politics.

We campaigned city wide, it was wonderful. I went in parts of Denver, having lived here always, that I'd never been. You know we'd go to Italian spaghetti suppers, we'd go to Jewish Kosher dinners, we'd go everywhere. It was great fun. Usually a man would come by and pick me up. Everyone was, when we'd go to a meeting like that, there would be the 18 Republicans and the 18 Democrats there'd be the senators from both parties running for the Senate there'd be the state offices, and you know Governors were two years then, so there'd be the Governor, the Lt. Governor and the Attorney General, all those people. There'd be the Judges of both parties running. I don't know how many people that made 80 or something. There'd be far more of us than there were people in the audience. One thing that always amused me, a man would tell a joke and it would go over big. So then the next meeting we'd go to, they'd look around and see if that man who told that joke was here yet and if he wasn't here somebody else would tell his joke and it would go over big and then he'd come and tell the joke and it fell flat. That night, it was a great game that they played. It was just wonderful. We wore signs on the tops of our cars so when we'd go to a meeting or after a meeting the residence of a ball game at Denver University was letting you park quickly on University and let the people drive by and see your sign on your car. Well November came and there was not one Republican in Denver elected except Duke Dunbar. He'd already been Attorney General. Palmer Birch was running for Governor, course he wasn't elected. Not another Republican was elected.

L.B. Of the 18 not a Republican representative.

J.B. No. That's right. Steve McNicoll was Governor. So I had a friend that I'd known for sometime named Betty Raye, and she had grown up in Washington D.C. Her father was a attorney and I think she had just built into her lobbying. She knew how to lobby. I didn't know that at this time but since. She asked me, she lobbied for mental health. She asked me

if I would help her lobby to make a two-party system situation. So I said sure. So what I know I learned from her. I spent then the next two sessions with her. We went to every Joint Budget Committee meeting, we went to all the institutions. At that time you could sit on the benches along the side of the Chamber. She was very attractive, tall, slender, blonde woman, and the men flocked to her. I didn't have any lobbying to do because there wasn't anybody for me to lobby, she did the lobbying, but I learned and that was great.

When the two years came by again, the Republicans called and asked me to run again. By this time I'd caused a buzz. I was enthusiastic. I was, that first time we ran they told us to go down to Ray Fry's printing company. Ray Fry had been the superintendent in my Sunday school when I was a kid. So I knew him, so all of us went down there and we got cards. They were all alike except for your name and your picture to pass out. Well what I found out was that nobody gives two hoots about cards like that. You go to a meeting and you lay them and nobody picks them up. You have them all to take home. That wasn't the way to do it. What you had to do is pull yourself out from the crowd. So I wore things like this. We wore hats in those day. I wore hats with the most flowers on that I could find. I did everything to be conspicuous to stand out from the men. Well so we campaigned that year, 1960 and so in Nov of 60 we had the election and Palmer Birch won and Chuck Burn who's brother Ed had been in the Senate, and Jene Bain won. Our names all began with B. So there I was.

L.B. How did you feel when you won and went down to the House to take the oath of office?

J.B. I think that I probably was awed. I probably didn't know enough to know how much I didn't know. I think I knew that I didn't know much. I went down, I know we could pick out a seat, where the Democrats had to move out of. I picked a seat on the center aisle the second seat from the back row. I could have had seats across that row and my tendency would have got to be in the middle seat and never move out of it, but I knew that I couldn't do that, that I had to force myself to be a part of the show.

L.B. So you got to choose your seat on the floor, the Speaker did not assign your seat on the floor?

J.B. No we picked our seat.

L.B. That's different than it is now

J.B. Yes, then when I moved, I moved down in the first row, I think I was the fourth seat over.

L.B. Cause I remember you sitting down front and my desk was right there by the window

J.B. Yes, Yes. Well I don't know I don't remember how many years I sat, but Bill Armstrong sat behind me back there, he sat in the back row. All my row had suburban legislators, Ruth Stockton, Bill Myrick, the fellows from Arapahoe County, and every time they pushed behind me to go to their seat, they made some dirty crack about Denver. (Laugh) In those days I think Denver had a lot more power than it does now, and influence and when it

combined with a rural legislators which it could do then it would have more influence. I think that has all changed. Metropolitan government, the Metropolitan Sewage District had been created. I think in those years the libraries combined so that you could borrow books in different libraries.

L.B. The Waffle system or wide area

J.B. Yes and the RTD I think, but otherwise we didn't do very well. I think that's one of the problems that still exists. There was a picture or map of the Cherry Creek School district and here all these little places, it was in Denver that a Cherry, it was ridiculous, Jefferson County being school crowded, Denver closing schools, because they don't have, it makes no sense. It was a problem then it's a problem today, it's never been solved. I was interested to see this year, I think they took the new freshman legislators and gave them three days orientation down at the Brown Palace or something like that.

L.B. I think this year they had a dinner at the Brown Palace and maybe a lunch but the whole orientation lasted a week.

J.B. A week? We had no orientation that I remember. We were told to keep quiet, sit in our seats learn what it was about. I didn't even know what the statutes were or how those numbers at the top of the bill related to the statutes. A friend of mine, Bert Gallegos who was a Democrat and in the House at that time, I served with him on some committees in Denver, he showed me how that worked.

L.B. They now have training for that. Of course with term limitations the new ones don't sit in the back and be freshmen any more and learn to listen, they're at the mike immediately and that was different when you served. You were expected to sit in your seat.

J.B. You know now they have all those early introduction bills and I know some of them are introduced by freshman who haven't probably haven't even been sworn in yet. But they have bills ready to be introduced. Well we, I learned, I think I learned and enjoyed it. John Mackie was the majority leader part of the time, he was a wonderful legislator. He would come back and he would give me an amendment to take up for something. I think perhaps I expected you go to the legislature and you expect Thomas Jefferson or John Adams all these great people, so it came as a shock, and I had to think about this, they aren't that way, they're just common ordinary everyday people. A few of them are superb. I think five or six men that I thought were just great, then there were a lot of just ordinary ones and then there were those that are nothing, practically just next to nothing. I know there was one man sat over on the Democratic side I think never got out of his chair, nobody even knew his name or who he was. Course they used to call role too in our day and I think that I've often thought of people who criticized the Legislature and I say to them sometime instead of standing out there making fun or giving advice why don't you get in there and see what it's really like. I said its something when there are people up in the galleries watching to see how you're going to vote and they call your name and here's all these ears, it takes courage to say yes or no.

L.B. Some of those votes are very difficult.

J.B. That's right, and you don't really experience that until it hits you. About the chamber itself. As I remember, we only had one Sergeant at Arms, that was Dan Dock. It always amused me he would come around with his clip board to see if you were going to whatever function was that evening. He would say to me, Jean, tonight the party is at Andy Kelly's Bar, you don't want to go. He'd mark me no. That was right. We had one matron in the gallery and I know she would let a little basket on a string down in that corner for him and it would say the children from the school in Boulder are sitting in the gallery and then they would get the word to the Representative from Boulder and he would go down to the microphone and he would introduce the children and they would stand up and every seat would squeak, eeeeeek and then they did that and all, it was a terrible noise. There was one man who used to sit right up there in the front of the gallery and I suppose he was what we would call homeless now but if your ever looked up at him he would go like this, and he ate bananas and he'd lay the peels down on the little railing. There were a lot of people, I think homeless people, I don't know maybe there still are, in the Capitol wandering around. I think we had as I know we had no security of any sort. There was the day when in late afternoon when the Indians came, were you there then? When they took us down to the East door to let us out and couldn't find the key and then sent us out the North door down amongst the Indians to get to our car. I remember that was a Friday and we had to go back on Saturday. There was no protection then. I think then they did get in. I remember they called the Denver Police at that time to come.

L.B. I remember being escorted down the North steps to my car and there was a , and then they came into the House chamber and they came through the double doors of the House chamber and down the aisle.

J.B. Yes they made an awful noise. There was an Indian woman pushing the man and those swinging doors and they were.....,

L.B. There wasn't any protection at that time

J.B. That was a funny day. Well I was chairman of the Education Committee for awhile and I was chairman of the Local Government Committee for awhile, I was the Vice-chairman of the Health & Welfare Committee at the time the a, we didn't call it abortion then I don't know what, Family planning something, and Rex Howell was the chairman of the committee and we were going to have an open hearing in the House chambers and Rex Howell fortunately or unfortunately got called back to Grand Junction for some reason so he couldn't be there and I had to chair that meeting of all the protester people. I remember that, that probably was the time I got, I think on Monday morning, I got grocery sacks full of mail, I think there was something like 789 letters, I got on that bill. They came from Catholic churches on what had been written Sunday, it was obvious, they were all alike. I often tell people about lobbying. I think lobbyists were a great help I don't know what the Legislature would do without them. That is, most lobbyists. I do remember there was a garden club ladies group who would call you at 7:00 in the morning and they would be down there to greet you when you walked in the building, then they'd have you called out to talk

to you and the League of Women Voters weren't very good lobbyists either. I would say to them don't annoy people, be helpful, don't pester us, tell the truth. So, but I can still see those garden club ladies.

L.B. Lobbyists can supply very good information and if they do not, they lose. They're the big losers.

J.B. Yes, Yes. I think one of the things that happened was, I think Harry Locke was chairman of the Joint Budget Committee, the question came up as to whether we should have computers that the state should buy computers or not and if we did it would be expensive and the basement would have to be remodeled had to be air conditioned, the floor would have to be examined to see if it would hold the main frame. Maybe computers weren't here to stay, so maybe we shouldn't invest that money. I know there was a long discussion about that as to whether we should. I think, fortunately they did. Then they got the statutes on the computers. The first committee I ever served on interim committee was the election laws committee and that committee had to go through all the statutes to find out anyplace that said anything about election laws. We did that with the children's codes too. They have to go through that, to get it on the computers is easy to do for the lobbyist. There was man by the name Frank Miles who did lobby for the schools. When Palmer Burch would change one little thing in the formula for the state aid to the schools, I'm sure Frank had to go home and sit up all night and figure out what that would do to every school district in the state and come back the next morning, no legislator had any time to do things like that, but he'd come back and tell you how it would effect every school district. I'm sure on computers they can do that very quickly but not then. So I asked him when the statutes, when they first got on. I remember, I asked him how many times in the statutes the word woman or female was mentioned, and they told me and I don't remember now how many it was but almost all of them were references to female animals, not women, very few references to women, The Capitol was not built for women, when we went out of the chambers and down those few steps to the cloak room and right there was the door to the men's room which was always open. But the year before I was down there the men had made that lounge on the third floor to which they all had a key.

L.B. Had the little bathroom right off the Senate hallway, Senate committee hallway.

J.B. Yes, up on the third floor on the north side. The women didn't have anything. Our restroom was, I always said was at 14th and Grant, so we'd have to go through the lobby along the rail to get there and get back and it would take you quite awhile to do that and get over there. Betty Pellet was the head woman in those days, the senior woman I guess. She apparently had thought they should do something for the women and so there was a room right there by that ladies room that they said the women could have, and I don't know, they must have asked business interior decorating committee to design something for it and they did. It came back and it was the year of the black watch plaid and Betty Pellet did not like black watch plaid and she said no, and so they did nothing. We had a few pictures in that room and I think maybe we had one of those old wooden chairs, that was it. There was no point in going there. Then it sat there empty and then the Senate took it back. I don't know what the women do now.

L.B. At some time it was made into the women's lounge with a sofa and a desk and the women had a key to it.

J.B. It's over there by the Senate?

L.B. Yes, but now it's back as an office. We made a women's lounge down in the basement and then the House women have their own bathroom and it's a very nice area it's in the House

J.B. It's in the basement?

L.B. No, it's right off the chambers. Then the House has a lounge room for the members right down, right off the House chamber, you go down the little steps, go down the hallway, there's a mens bathroom on one side and the ladies on the other and a lounge room. That was made when I worked for Bev. When he was Speaker. The women do have nice areas now.

J.B. Well that's good. There was a ladies restroom on the north side of the chambers, on the 3rd floor, you could sneak up those back stairs and go there. Then I went back one year and it had been changed to men. The sign had been changed. I often went up there because you could get up there and get back in a short time where as you had to plan to go.....

L.B. Ask for a recess.

J.B. That's right, that's right. We had only a, we had the desk with a drawer and the little thing down the side and then we had those two shelves where our bill books were, that's all we had, that's everything we had. Before I left here, a year or two, we did get a file drawer over against the wall. But I think now what was awful, we also had no help. I think they used to have about five girls who were clerks or something who went around and put the bills in the bill books and laid that status sheet on your desk.

L.B. That was your office, right there on the floor.

J.B. That's right when it was open nobody kept anybody out. I mean you were always available to anybody who came. Which, it isn't that bad I never felt that I was unduly pressed upon after all I was down there. I was a representative, I was a representative of the people. I went to a meeting not long ago where they were talking about initiatives and you know shouldn't we do more with initiatives. You elect these people to go down there and do these things for you. Why don't you let them do it. Or else throw that one out and put another one in. This is the system. Well we had of course, I never was there when they had open caucuses, we always had closed caucuses. The Rules committees, I think there is merit in closed caucuses. We would go in there and the men would unbutton their collars and they would pull down their ties and then they would go at each other. That's kind of what you would do at home when you punish your children. You don't do it out in public in front of the press. You iron out your problems. I said to my kids you sit in that chair and you sit there until you know you're not supposed to cross the street. And they learned not to cross the street. But I don't do that out in the public. I think that rules committee, I see in the

paper now, and I heard the other day, I think in David Brinkley, it was in the paper too about this stupid bill that they put in about other legislators, if you landed a plane and hit a deer why the deer was yours, and you had a vicious dog and they take your welfare check away, well you had a vicious dog and not on welfare, or anything, or if you brought wolves into Montana they would, they were also supposed to put wolves in Central Park in NYC. Well the Rules committee sorted those things out. The Rules committee also could put similar bills together so that they'd all get on the calendar at the same time. Well, OK.

L.B. Jean, do you remember the first bill you introduced?

J.B. I don't have any vague idea what the first bill was I introduced. I do know, I don't think I take credit for any bills, I sometimes say I do. But everything was done in combination with somebody else. Clarence Quinlan sat next to me I'd known him up in Boulder in school. He came from Antonito, he came one day and said I've found out that Colorado and New Mexico if we work with them we could save the Cumbres Toltec Railroad, will you help? Sure, I'll help and we did and we saved it and it's great. Ray Black had been approached by Dr. Tempee out at CU about child abuse, could we do anything about child abuse, so we did. I guess when I was on Education I think I worked with Alan Dines some and we thought of putting in Auraria. We'd already made a state system of the community colleges, but look Denver doesn't have any higher education, public higher education. We have DU, we have Regis, we have Loretta, no public institutes. For people who work downtown to go to school, go on to school, continue their education, get the degree, advance in a job. We created Auraria, that was great. I went with a man down to Pueblo to the hospital to visit before Ft Logan. Pueblo was a horrible place, the hospice, the beds were just as close together as they could get. We went up into the criminally insane, that frightened me a little bit, but I thought oh, these men will take care of me, I don't think they'll hurt me, but of course they paid no attention to me. But then we went back down into another building where there were women, we walk in a long hall, there all along the sides of the hall were these women squatting on the floor with their clothes torn off of them. Like this, awful. And so we're walking through there, a door opens a woman comes out of a room and she opens up her arms and she screams Men!, Men! Where did all these beautiful men come from. Well the men scurried. They got behind me just as fast as they could. Some of those men didn't gain color back in their cheeks until we got back up to Palmer Lake. We then had the opportunity to create a new hospital and a federal government bed at Ft Logan. So we created Ft Logan as a hospital. Not everything has gone, I think, the way we hoped it would. We hoped that many people could get back into the community and the community would take care of them. I don't know if that's done very well. We did the children's code. I was the vice-chairman and Ben Klein was the chairman and we did the children's code. I think we did

L.B. What brought that up to the fore? The children's code, what brought that out, were there so many problems that....?

J.B. No, as I remember it was just to put all the laws that were on the books together that scattered from hither and yon.

L.B. To codify it.

J.B. To put it together and make it a code. So they pulled out all the sections and said what should we do, we spent a long summer doing that and heard a lot of testimony from people who worked with children. The Police. The police wanted it more strict. There were the people who said because the neighborhood kids come along and knocks down all their tools, he isn't a criminal. He should be taken care of and trained a little bit. I'm sure it was done with all good intentions by everybody who had any part of it. I think it hasn't turned out that way, there's been trouble, children didn't turn out, families haven't turn out.

L.B. The world's a different place

J.B. That's right, and so Pat Pascoe sat across the table from me and said to me, I guess someone introduced me or mentioned me when we were around the table. She said something about the children and referring to me, oh she said we're working on the children's code again. Well I know they are. So that, that was.... I think there were many good things but I can't take.. I sometimes say to people, somebody will say they go to Auraria or go to school at Metropolitan, and then I will say oh, I'm the grandmother of Auraria or something. The dental school at CU we started, and I have a plaque from the dental school. You know Denver University had the dental school and then they closed up and then there was no a dental school. So now and again I have a young man or dentist who will mention.....

L.B. I have a friend who's son went to that dental school

J.B. Oh yes

L.B. Didn't you make it so that other states could use that dental school

J.B. Yes, I think so.

L.B. There was a reciprocal agreement

J.B. I think so, I think that was it, I think so. Another thing that amuses me, you know you put your name (and occupation) then you're a lawyer or a doctor or a merchant, so here I am, I work with a name and there are people who are in my task force, who have nothing to put after their name except you're a housewife, cook, bottle washer, launderer,

L.B. Now they put Legislator.

J.B. Now they do. I noticed one woman put Mother, mother and she might have said homemaker. I thought about that a lot. Because in a way you're downgraded, but I thought you know I represent all the other people like me, all the other women, it's important, it's important. The Doctors can represent all the doctors, the lawyers can represent all the lawyers, but I represented a group too. The men used to say to me Jean, you want the best of both worlds and I'd say yes you know I do. I want to be equal I want to be able to do what I can do as well as you and I want help on with my coat and I'll help you on with your coat too. But they used to kid me about that. Well we had to. You mentioned term limits I think a few minutes ago. I think I am opposed to term limits I think legislators ought to have sense enough to quit

on their own. I know that you're down there, you do what you can, and the time comes when you feel like you've done that and you should quit. You don't just hang on there just because it's there. Just because you don't have anything else to do. I think the legislator himself ought to do that. There has to be some continuity I'm sure of that. You can't have them all come in new all the time. But I wish the legislators or the voters would make that decision rather than the campaign expenses. It used to cost me about 1500 dollars, I think I spent. We get 100 dollars a month pay you know. I figure that I, we never got expenses, I think we got 20 dollars a day when we had those interim committees and I think we got paid for the days we were in the session, 120 days, but we never got anything like expenses, you know, meals or mileage unless you lived out. Out of state somewhere. Now I think I hear them say they spend anywhere from 35, 50, 75 thousand in a district in Denver.

L.B. Thirty five thousand was the going rate this past election to run a representative campaign in Denver, that was the minimum.

J.B. And of course they get a little more pay but even at that it isn't 17..of course that's two years and you campaign again so you don't make any money off that job. I've run a lot of campaigns off this dining room table. See I ran seven times, my husband ran for the school board three times and then we did, he did, when the judges were taken out of politics so a lot of stamps have been licked on this table. As far as any perks or things like that, I can't remember, we'd get a pen, a calendar,

L.B. A cup?

J.B. Never got a cup, they weren't in style, maybe we'd get a flower on Valentines. For instance Chet Enstrom was in the Senate and when he'd go home to Grand Junction he'd bring us back a box of Enstroms candies. There was one man out in Adams county who was a druggist and he'd bring a little box of candy on Valentines Day. We were invited to dinners, and things like that, a meal. I can't think of anything, I think maybe there was a ski weekend that was offered. I can't think of anything else that .. I think there in your questions, you mentioned wine, women, and song. I never saw anything of that sort. I was not aware of anything going on in the Capitol. There might have been, most of the men lived at the Shirley Savoy when I first started and what went on at the Shirley Savoy, I have no idea. I think maybe many decisions may have been made at the Shirley Savoy.

L.B. I have heard that.

J.B. I don't know that, I was not a witness to that. When I'd ride in cars across the state or some place with men and they'd talk. Never did I hear anything bad. I mean I really am rather proud of that, that it was like that.

L.B. I'm very proud of our legislators.

J.B. Dirty politics, I'm a politician, I'm proud of it and I'm not a dirty politician and you can..

L.B. Jean I was there on the floor for over 23 years and I never knew of a vote being bought or

sold I never knew of votes being traded, I feel Colorado is so fortunate to have such good people on both sides of the aisle.

J.B. There was one occasion and I think this was a joke, one of those..., Vince Massari was in it I think. I remember some people yelling out "you owe me that one" or something like that. But again I think you know that stuff is part of the game. I think the party system, the two party system, I look on it as a great game it's just like the Broncos, they plan and, I can remember when the Republicans first got in charge down here one of the things they said, we're going to meet at nine o'clock in the morning instead of ten o'clock we're going to show the people we're here, we're serious about what we're going to do, They changed the color of the pink book and they made it green or something like that. This is a game, this is a game people play this side against the other side. They're doing it in congress right now. I enjoy watching it.

L.B. The loyal opposition

J.B. That's right and that's fun and yet the fact that we have two parties really makes things better, because they come out of there and you work it out and you perhaps get some place than if you were all over here centered in your own little circle. Friction makes it better. You know I served with Dick Lamm and Roy Romer. I learned, I think to love every man down there for what he was worth for good or bad.

L.B. Jean, what's your favorite spot in the Capitol?

J.B. Oh I don't think I have a favorite spot. I suppose my desk. I don't think I have any favorite spot. It's changed so much now.

L.B. Some of the members tell me it was their desk on the floor. Now that they have offices they have a different feeling about that. Some say they really like the rotunda, but almost everybody has a spot that they feel close to.

J.B. I wouldn't have had any idea what it would have felt like to have an office. We would go, the telephone was always out in the hall and we'd get called to the telephone but we always go out there so much, so I have no feeling of what it would be like to have a private, or where you could pull away from your, we had no parking places when I first started down there we just parked where-ever we could then later we got assigned parking places.

L.B. Whatever was available, that's where you parked?

J.B. I think probably there must have been fewer people coming down or something. Maybe most of the men walked over and there wouldn't have been a car and they wouldn't....

L.B. There were so many rural legislators there that may not have driven a car down.

J.B. That's right. I think of what happened to me because I was in the legislature, and when I quit

or during the last years I was there, the good things that happened to me that probably would not have happened to me had I never experienced this. I thought it was very fortunate that it came at a time when my life was changing, when my family was growing up and I didn't have kids to take to school or fix lunches for, go to PTA. That I just thought I'd mention, I was asked to serve on the, as a trustee of the University of Northern Colorado. That was another thing we did, you know, we changed those to Universities you know with Colorado State.. I was on the board of trustees there, I was on the board of Doan College in Crete, Nebraska, I was appointed by the Secretary of Defense, I was appointed to an organization called Make a Wish which was about 35 or 40 women from all over the United States every one from a different state. We looked to see how women in the military were being treated so we were flown all over the United States into the training camps at Quantico and a....

L.B. That's an on going project, they're still doing some of that, maybe not under the same name.

J.B. Yes they're still doing that, no it's the same name cause I've gone to a meeting in the last few years, we met at the Air Force Academy, and went to NORAD and looked after.. that was very exciting to travel all over the United States and go to the Pentagon, cause my husband had been in the military, the Army when, he was stationed in Washington when they moved into the Pentagon, he'd been in the munitions building and they moved over to the Pentagon. But to go to the Pentagon, and so that was great. I was on the executive council of United Church of Christ which is my congregation, which is the board that runs the church, and so I got to serve on that again. Got to know all the top people in our church, that was wonderful, I enjoyed that. All the good things I think that came because I'd been in the legislature.

L.B. Sure.

J.B. Another thing that troubles me some is that I was appointed in 1974 when the court order came down to desegregate the Denver Public schools. Judge Doyle appointed a citizens committee to oversee the desegregation and he appointed Chancellor Mitchell chairman the committee and I was on the committee. Chancellor of CU Denver was the Head of the Council of Churches. Chancellor Mitchell stayed on for a year and then he dropped off and I got to be the chairman. I had something like 200 monitors, 2 in every school in the city of Denver who kept track of what was going on in the schools. At that time there were more schools and the people hadn't all moved to the suburbs then. Every time the telephone rang you didn't know what kind of trouble was next. And even when Chancellor Mitchell was the head of the, because of his position, I did understand that, he didn't want to go so I went. I think with every honest bones in all of our bodies we hoped it would work, and looking back now I don't think it did. We had people come from Los Angeles, Boston all to see what we were doing here because we had pretty much kept the peace in the city. There were not any riots and what not. That was one, I'm not sorry I did it, I wish the outcome had....But again I believe as I believe in a number of those other things at the time we did what we thought was right and that was that.

L.B. Well Jean it was just very interesting, can you tell me something about, and this is just being a Chief Clerk, the physical aspects of the House. Was the Speaker's office where it is now or was it over on the north wall of the chamber? At sometime that was moved and I don't

know when those offices were changed.

J.B. The Speaker's office, as I remember, if you go in the middle door of the chambers and then, it seems to me those offices were all towards the south there over toward the Senate.

L.B. That's where they are now.

J.B. That's where they are now. That's where I remember, I do not, there seems to me there were the gals who worked the steno room. I think they were over there and then the cloak room was here.

L.B. I was just trying to find a history of that, when Dave Hamil was Speaker, he had his Speaker's office over in that corner where the stenos were.

J.B. Oh he did?

L.B. I don't know why it was moved.

J.B. I don't know, when I knew Dave he was the head of the institutes or

L.B. REA, or head of the Institutions.

J.B. Yes, head of Institutions

L.B. He was named the head of Institutions

J.B. He'd come back then from REA. He'd gone east and then he came back.

L.B. He was named head of REA under two presidents and of course he's retired, living in Sterling now but he told me that that was where his office was. Was there a calendar when you first came?

J.B. Calendar, Yes there was a calendar. There was a calendar and a journal. It was always put in our books. Funny thing, the status sheet was always put on our desk every morning.

L.B. It was a throw away. It was new every morning

J.B. Yes, it was new every morning, The lady that sat next to me who smoked constantly, they don't smoke anymore do they? We were always dressed nicely, including the men. Once in awhile on a holiday, the men would come in casual. But she had here, I think it was in the middle of March, her first term, she said to me, why do they put this on my desk for every day. She had no vague idea what it was. I think she went through the whole session that she didn't know half of what was going on.

L.B. How many women served with you?

J.B. Well, there were five, the fewest I think and ten was the most, Betty Pellet, Kathleen Littler, Ruth Stockton, Ruth Clark, Rena Mary Taylor was in the Senate, Madge somebody was from Pueblo, Madge, (Gaylord) I can't think of her last name, Lela Gilbert, I think there was a lady named Hestia Wilson, I think she was in the Senate, I think there were two women in the Senate. She had been appointed to fill her husbands vacancy. So the fewest we ever had, were five and the most was ten.

L.B. So many more now.

J.B. Oh yes, Yes I can't believe it.

L.B. I think there are 27 or 28 I've forgotten the exact number and then there's probably 9 in the Senate.

J.B. I had no feeling that we were mistreated or, I always felt we were treated squarely and given our dues. I remember I was awed by, we had 600 bills over the session, I think. You can't begin to know what that's about, I don't know anything about boilers, I don't know anything about sheep, you know all these things. I had to find people, men, whom I could trust and in turn I think they trusted me. They would come to me and say what do you think about this and then vote with them because I didn't know any better. I think this is true it must be true, nobody could know all the...

L.B. That's the committee system. They all go to a committee, the public has input, lobbyists have input, leader too, and the committee goes and votes on that bill and then it comes to the floor. You couldn't possibly research 600 bills.

J.B. That's right. Once in the summer, a man across the street came out the same time I came out and he said to me, Jean why did you vote such and such a way on such and such a bill. I said because I thought that was the best way to vote. Then he went on and told me what was wrong with it. Why are you telling me now, why didn't you tell me before I voted. Doesn't do any good to tell me now. I think that's a timing, those timing things are so important. Betty Miller was another person who was in the legislature when I was there. We used to eat a lot. Did we eat when you were there? Almost every day somebody had a birthday or a wedding anniversary or something that they'd pass out candy bars or donuts or cookies or something. We always had food. Ben Klein who sat across the aisle, behind, always had packages of potato chips and half eaten sandwiches. We also had mice.

L.B. We've got mice. With the bathroom, and we have a refrigerator, a microwave and coffee and food is kept back there. Although they can still bring food out on the floor. You know coffee, you'll see a coffee, maybe they'll have a donut, but most of that is done in the lounge it's so close, it's comfortable. No lobbyist is allowed in the lounge room. Newsmen only go to get their coffee and leave. So it is a place where Representatives can go, read the paper, relax, maybe have lunch, fix some popcorn in the microwave and it has proved to be a very good get away place for the members.

J.B. Good, good, good.

L.B. Jean, I'm going to ask you one of my favorite questions and that is if you could change one thing back to the way it used to be, repeal a law, relocate an office, bring back a particular elected official. What would you change?

J.B. I really don't know that, I really don't know that much about it now. In the years that I've been out and I go back to the Capitol and I'd run into somebody I know, a Ted Strickland or somebody, they'd say Jeannie it isn't the way it used to be when you were here. So you look back for the good ol days. Good old days.

L.B. I think you feel that there is a miss in the Capitol by having the other state officials out of the building, like Secretary of State is no longer there, the Attorney General isn't there, the Judiciary has now moved and they used to occupy quite a bit of the second floor, second and third floor.

J.B. The Supreme Court.

L.B. The Supreme Court is now a hearing room, and some people think that, that has changed the feeling in the Capitol by having those executive offices out of the building.

J.B. I don't think I can really say because I don't know what it, I mean my, you know, the Legislative Drafting Office, the Legislative Council, the Bill Room. The Bill Room don't you have to go across the.....

L.B. The Bill Room is in the Old Museum Building now. The Print Shop is over there and the Bill Room is over there.

J.B. I don't know, I guess I'd like the olden days. Even going across the street to the Quorum or something to the restaurant, it isn't there any more is it? I don't know where people go to eat lunch.

L.B. It's now changed to be the China Cowboy. A Chinese food restaurant is in there.

J.B. I do remember that the lunch room in the basement was not a veryit just kind of was there.

L.B. Some things do not change.

J.B. I often thought that you know if they could just put up a lattice work or something rather than people all going through there. I know they have changed the food over into a walk through someplace haven't you?

L.B. And put in ventilation, and that has helped but....

J.B. That wasn't very attractive.

L.B. Maybe if we go through the restoration of the Capitol many things will help.

J.B. Pat Paschal said across the table yesterday, we heard this morning about restoring the Capitol, Golden wouldn't have us out there and Pueblo wouldn't have us out there or something. I know they said on the news last night about whether to do it all or to do just what needed to be done. How much it would cost.

L.B. It needs to be fixed going into the next century, because it really is a fire trap. Those of us who work there know many things that need to be fixed.

J.B. Well that's one of those.....

L.B. Jean is there any thing else that you'd like to tell me about.

J.B. I don't think so.

L.B. It's been wonderful visiting with you today.

J.B. Well it was fun, it was real fun for me, I enjoyed it you know I loved it. I would have gone on forever at the legislature, because I liked it. But I also know it isn't the thing to do, so when I decided, in fact Clarence and I used to talk and we'd say ten years, he served longer than I did. Ten years and I served twelve. By then I thought my ten years is up you'd better get out of here. Carol Tempest was with our captain in the district, I think and so I told her do you want to run? So then she ran and she got that seat for two years and then Jack McCroskey got it. I think I probably could have been elected, I ran two years, two times in '60' they put us into districts, and my district, there were Bill Lowery, Dick Lamm, Don Horst, Frank Kemp and maybe there was another man, we were all in this district. Except then they drew the line and they drew, Frank Kemp lived down in the Country Club, so they drew it up first Avenue and then they went around like this.

L.B. You're talking about gerrymandering.

J.B. Yes I am. And so then Phil Lowery, Dick, they all moved out. They all moved out of the district which left it for me. I think I probably could have kept it, I think it probably changed more Democratic now because, Pat Pascoe and the lady whom I don't know, who's our representative, who doesn't have an address just a post office box, and I don't know her.

L.B. I don't know who the representative is now

J.B. Well it's Begetti or something like that.

L.B. Oh, oh, O.K. Representative DeGette

J.B. Do you know her?

L.B. Yes.

J.B. I never laid eyes on her. So I think that the neighborhood has changed., and then of course

the district, I suspect it's been..... well we ran in 66' and I think they threw that out you know and then in 68' we ran at large again. In 70' we ran...

L.B. 70' and 80' and 90' it was drawn by that commission.

J.B. It lacked a lot of fun. See my district ran from Broadway to Colorado Blvd and not quite as far as Colfax, cut out the country club, went out south or east of Broadway and then went out by Gray Way. But there's no single thing, no church, there's no school there's no nothing, not a single thing to draw it together. We weren't a Capitol Hill neighborhood, we weren't a Belcaro neighborhood, we weren't anything. There wasn't anybody who cared about it. And that's another thing I don't know that districting is the....I thought I represented the city of Denver and I didn't represent from Colfax south and Broadway east, I represented Denver, and I was just as interested in people in north Denver and northeast Denver and southeast Denver and I'm not sure that, that I go for districts. But I'm not running the show.

L.B. Well Jean I want to thank you.

J.B. Well you're just as welcome as can be.