

University of Texas at San Antonio Archives and Special Collections

MS 317. Archives for Research on Women and Gender Oral History Project

Nancy Hein Transcript, April 15, 1997

Ruthe Winegarten: This is Ruthe Winegarten, and I'm in the lovely facility of the San Antonio Woman's Club on San Pedro and it is Tuesday, April fifteenth, nineteen ninety-seven and I'm talking to Nancy Hein.

RW: Now Nancy, I want to test out your voice, so if you'll go ahead and tell who you are and, uh, when you joined the Woman's Club, we'll back up and see, make sure we're hitting you also.

Nancy Hein: My name is Nancy Hein, I joined the Woman's Club in nineteen sixty-six, my mother-in-law was president of the Woman's Club...

RW: And what was her name?

NH: Uh, Mrs. Henry F. Hein, her first name was Paula. She was president of the Woman's Club from nineteen sixty-seven to sixty-nine.

RW: And how did you come to join the Woman's Club? Were you already a member?

NH: No. I was living here in San Antonio, and my mother-in-law was very active in the Woman's Club. She told me about it, at that point, it was a very active Woman's Club, and they met all four Wednesdays a month. And so, every Wednesday afternoon, there were meetings with programs here, held in the clubhouse. Also, there were about 20 roundtables at that time, all had luncheons once a month also held in the Club House.

RW: What does this mean, roundtable? Is that like a committee or a interest group?

NH: Roundtables are interest groups. And we have about fifteen or twenty of these, and the membership of the Woman's Club would join a roundtable that would meet in luncheon session once a month, and the club dates were October through May of every year. No meetings were held during the

summer, and, at that point, we had a waiting list of women wishing to join the roundtables, 'cause we could only accommodate twenty four around the big round table in the dining room. So later, because of the popularity, we increased roundtable membership to thirty five members that could join a roundtable and it was strictly because of logistics of serving and the people who did the serving. At that time, we had a couple who lived on the premises of the Woman's Club who did the cooking for the luncheons. And their names were Charles and Theresa. And we had accommodations upstairs where they lived, and they would prepare all the meals for these fifteen to twenty roundtables that would meet every month.

RW: Was this a black couple?

NH: No. They were Anglo and they were from Chicago. And they were well-liked, and we all remember their wonderful meals. That's how the Woman's Club was when I started coming, and I enjoyed coming every Wednesday afternoon. We always had tea hour and our programs would usually begin around two in the afternoon. And there would be a speaker, and we would usually have the programs upstairs, and then we would come down for tea in the afternoon into the large dining room. Most of the women who were hostesses at that time would wear long dresses...

RW: Really? In the sixties?

NH: Yes. And it was a very formal affair, we would have receiving lines in the entry, and members and guests on special occasions would come in the front door. Because it's closer to the parking lot, we all liked to come in the side door. Whenever we had really special or very formal occasions, members and guests went through a receiving line headed by our president along with club officers. It's very different, it has changed very much in the last thirty years.

RW: Well, what did you all, what did the members wear? Did you all wear uh, suits?

NH: If we were hostesses, we would wear long dresses. And each roundtable would be a hostess at least once during the club year. At that point, we would order the cakes, and make sandwiches and we

provided beautiful fresh flower arrangements on the table. Also the roundtables, when they met every month in luncheon session—I'm talking more the way it used to be—the hostesses would be responsible for making beautiful fresh flower arrangements for the dining table.

RW: Could you be a member of more than at the same time?

NH: Yes. You could be a member of up to four roundtables. It's just how your schedule would work. And we do have a listing of the roundtables that were available for membership. The one that I joined was Carousel Roundtable, and this roundtable was the only roundtable at that point that had no program per se, every month. It was strictly a roundtable where one could come and visit with each other. Members of this roundtable built very close ties, many of our charter members are dead now, but this was a roundtable that enjoyed being with each other. And we would try to find things that we could do together to help the Woman's Club. For example, we had napkins that were donated by members of the club that were beautifully embroidered and we made a tablecloth out of thirty, forty-four napkins to be used for tea hours.

RW: I see, kind of like a quilt.

NH: Yes. So this roundtable was really into hand work. They redid curtains in the powder room upstairs, one of our members would bring a sewing machine in and we would really sew and do hand work on several occasions. And so, I miss that in this roundtable now, because it seems like instead of making things and talking as a group, it's easier to give money as a group.

RW: That's sad, in a way, isn't it?

NH: Yes, it is. I just wanted to say about the Junior Roundtable, how that started. When I became a member, we had no Junior Roundtable, at that time, most of our members were older, so I was considered one of the younger members. So we started a Junior Roundtable and then that became the Friendship Roundtable. It was in the early seventies. Well, anyway our Junior Roundtable grew. We started out our Junior Roundtable by being service-oriented. And so, several of the members would go

out to Fort Sam to Brooke Army Hospital and serve cookies and punch to patients. And so, we tried to do a little bit of service that way. And later, we became the Friendship Roundtable and we reinstated Friendship Day. Eleanor Brackenridge, our founder, had done this, and so when Leta Baughn was president, Leta and I went up to the governor's office in Austin and to have him sign a proclamation for Friendship Day. We'd already done that here, in San Antonio with the mayor. And so we started having Friendship Day luncheons and bringing back the Friendship Day. To accommodate the large number of members and guests for the Friendship luncheons, we originally held these at Oak Hills Country Club. Later, our roundtable made the luncheons and table decorations and served the guests and members throughout the downstairs of the Club House. That's sort of what the junior department evolved from in the early seventies.

RW: Were you, were the members of, say the Carousel Roundtable, friends before they became members? Or do they develop the friendships afterwards?

NH: Developed, I think most of them developed the friendships within the club. Now, everybody may bring in friends as guests and they can join.. I see that more happening now, but when I joined, it was just a group of people, a group of women who were very congenial. Really enjoyed being together, and we still enjoy being together. Just this morning, I was talking to Mary Flack, our house manager, and I was saying, I was looking in our, area, where the silverware is stored. And I said, "Oh, this looks like a project." We need pacific silver cloth to cover all our big silver trays and the big coffee makers, because they were in need of silver polishing. Sounds like a great idea for the Carousel Roundtable.

RW: Are you still a member of the Carousel?

NH: Yes. I joined that in the beginning, and also joined the Friendship Roundtable, I'm not an active member of Friendship right now, because I'm involved with my work. But we also have an evening roundtable called Soiree, and this is for women who have a hard time getting out during the day, but can come and meet in the evening once a month.

RW: What kind of work do you do?

NH: I'm a travel consultant.

RW: So in the beginning, or in the sixties, were most of the women not working?

NH: That's correct. That's [laughter] that's very true. Yes.

RW: So I wanted to hear about some of the changes that you have, um, indicated.

NH: Well, we have changed from our very formal tea hours and that change happened probably in the eighties. And in the eighties, instead of having tea hour at the general meeting, we started having luncheons at the clubhouse. And so the women who had children needed to get home, before three to be home for the children. Also women did not like having the tea hour anymore...

RW: Why?

NH: ...and I would like to have that to come back.

RW: Because it was too late in the day? Or what?

NH: It's just a different feeling, I think. I'd like to see it—October as our opening tea, to honor our past presidents.

RW: This was for the whole club, not just the...

NH: The whole club. And so it was a general tea, and it was a way to open up the club for the club year. And it was—a joyous occasion. Everybody tried to make it for October, because we honored our past presidents, and here again, we had the formal receiving line in the front room. And they were all wished well, and it was great to see them. And I would say, within the last ten years, we've now had a general meeting in October. And, they, the past presidents are introduced, but it doesn't have this wonderful feeling, a real grand opening of the clubhouse, which I miss, very much.

RW: Well, how many members, let's see, you must have had four or five hundred members in the sixties, if you had twenty four or thirty two roundtables.

NH: Well, we had about twenty roundtables, but not all of them had twenty members. Not all—of

course we have to remember that the same people could join three roundtables or four roundtables.

And then, there was a time, in Carousel Roundtable where we had a waiting list. And you had to wait until somebody resigned, or in those days, in the late sixties and early seventies, it was very difficult to get into some of the roundtables, so that if you missed three times without a quote, excuse, like you were sick, you were dropped from the roundtable to make room for somebody who really wanted to come in.

RW: Sounds very exclusive.

NH: It was.

RW: Kind of like a sorority, or something.

NH: Yes, it was, in those days, it was very selective. We also have a roundtable on Saturdays, that caters to people who work.

RW: Well, how many members do you have now?

NH: I don't know. I haven't counted them, but right now, we probably have 175.

RW: Has the age of the members changed? Are they getting older?

NH: Not really. We have a lot of younger women who join. I think they join because of our Fiesta Coronation, and they want their children to participate in the Woman's Club Teen Coronation.

RW: What are those? Tell me about it.

NH: O.K.

RW: I know nothing about those.

NH: Oh, O.K. Well, here again, I'm talking about the old days when I first joined the Woman's Club. The Fiesta Flower Show was always held in the clubhouse. And there was a fee to enter, and it was a very minimal, like, two dollars per person. But, all the beautiful flower arrangements—every roundtable would make a flower arrangement, and the different departments of the club would make flower arrangements and then individuals would make flower arrangements. We always had a theme

for each Fiesta Flower Show, and there was also a horticulture division. And so, in the horticulture division, everybody was encouraged to bring plants that were grown in their own gardens, they had to have them in their possession for a minimum of three months. And they would bring them to the club, and there were judges that were certified, flower show judges to come and judge our flower show. At that time here in the library, we also had our show open to the military bases garden clubs. They used this library where we're taping today for their floral arrangements. We had the Teen Coronation that was held upstairs.

RW: And what was that?

NH: That was for members' children or grandchildren, they would be presented. And the club would vote on the queen and the princess, and then we had other children who were in the little Fiesta Teen Coronation. And that's how the Woman's Club was holding the Fiesta Flower Show in those days. And then, later, we moved to the San Antonio College. We needed more room, and so we used their auditorium and we had magnificent flower shows. And it was an excellent choice because we had a lot of parking space over there. We also presented the Teen Coronation on the big stage. And, we would have...

RW: You said coronation.

NH: Coronation. The queen and the princess of the Woman's Club Teen Coronation would be crowned by the King of Fiesta. He would come with his entourage, and he would crown our teenagers every year. Then after we were at San Antonio College with our flower show, for a number of years we moved out to North Star Mall. Until our move to North Star Mall all attendees donated to tickets for entry to the flower show. We had beautiful flower shows for a few years in the mall near the old Frost Bros., now Mervyn's, store. The teen queen coronation was also held at the mall. I, personally, did not like the event to be so public—I preferred our Club House or a private area. But we also held the coronation. And then, we see that in the year nineteen eighty-eight or so, the Fiesta Flower Show was

moved down to Rivercenter Mall, and then we added the Fiesta luncheons at Marriott River Center and it's an official Fiesta event. It's now one of our money raisers. Invitations are sent out and a great hot contest is included, which is always fun. Also, a beautiful Fiesta Fashion Show is presented with professional models and also community women as guest models. Susan Yerkes is always a guest model.

RW: And that's coming up next week?

NH: Yes, it's coming up next week. And we have about four hundred people who come.

RW: Martha? Hi, we're over here.

NH: Behind you.

RW: Alright.

NH: Yes, I went to Austin High School.

RW: You did?

NH: Graduated from Austin High, and I graduated in nineteen fifty-five. Did you go to Austin High?

Winegarten: No, I was just trying to think of where it is now.

NH: It's downtown on twelfth and Rio Grande.

RW: It's where the Austin Community College is now.

NH: It's Austin Community College now. But when I started Austin High School tenth grade, there was only one high school. And then in the eleventh grade, then they added two more high schools, Travis and MacCallum. And so, my high school graduating class was three hundred and thirty-five about. And then I entered University of Texas in nineteen fifty-five, and I got into the liberal arts plan two program...

RW: Really? It means you're smart.

Winegarten: My best friend was in that.

NH: Really? Well, the first year I couldn't get talked into Plan II. And then I met students who were

in plan two, and they kept telling me, you need to come and talk to a counselor and get in, so I did. I am really glad I made the change. I really loved going to college, I went in the summertime. All year around.

RW: What did you study? I know plan twos are generalists.

NH: And it's liberal arts, and I did not do a real major, I just said liberal arts. I had taken piano for years from Miriam Gordon Landrum. And then quit when I got into high school because I was in the band. So for electives, for one or two years, I just took piano again. At Texas, I took so many electives, it was great.

RW: Well, it sounded like you had a ball.

Winegarten: You take whatever you wanted?

NH: Yes. But I had to take the required course load, what the plan was, but, no, I didn't major because I really didn't know what I wanted to do.

RW: What did you, did you graduate?

NH: Yes, in nineteen sixty. I got my B.A. And my sister had been there four years before, so when I was attending University of Texas, she at that time was student program director.

RW: What was her name?

NH: Betty Tieken. So she was there at Texas then in that capacity before she went to San Marcos for a year, and was, I think associate dean of students or women. She filled in for someone who going to be gone like a sabbatical for a year.

JILL THIS IS WHERE I LEFT OFF MAKING CORRECTIONS. ENJOY.

RW: T-e-k-i-n?

NH: T-i-e-k-e-n. And so, anyway, I loved, I loved the university life, and joined a sorority, but I still wanted to live at home. But my parents wouldn't...in my senior year they said, "Now, you must go

live away now for one year.”

RW: What sorority was it?

NH: I was Gamma Phi Beta. So I moved into the house for the year. But I still had to call home and find out what was going on. And, so, then I married in nineteen, uh, fifty-nine.

RW: What was your husband’s name.

NH: Robert Hein, H-e-i-n. He was from San Antonio.

RW: Did you meet him at the university?

NH: I met him at the university at the Lutheran Student Center. So we were both Lutherans, and I knew that I wanted to marry a Lutheran. And so, I would go there every Sunday and, so, anyway, we got married, and after my husband graduated with a pharmacy degree we moved to San Antonio and his parents had been in the drug business and his father, Henry Hein had been a parks commissioner.

RW: That name sounds so familiar to me.

NH: Really? In San Antonio, he’d been a parks commissioner for years, and he was also a pharmacist and they were very active in the community. And they had, sort of, sold the pharmacy, and the man had, he decided that he wanted to move to another place. So, when they wee, I guess in their late sixties, they purchased the pharmacy back, and my husband worked there, so we moved to San Antonio. I’m really glad that we moved here.

RW: Did you have some children?

NH: We have one daughter. Elizabeth Hein.

RW: So you were not working when you joined, or your mother-in-law said, “Why don’t you join the Women’s Club?”

NH: Yes, she was very interested in having me come. And I was working part-time as a legal secretary, and, uh, so I, I enjoyed it a lot, and later my mother, when my parents retired, and moved to San Antonio, then my mother joined the Woman’s Club.

RW: Really? Well, this is wonderful.

NH: Yeah. So, it was the, Woman's Club was very much of a social club. And it was a time to come together and just visit. And right now, the Woman's Club is more into doing and raising money and keeping the clubhouse going.

RW: Yes, it must be expensive to keep it up.

NH: Yes, it's very expensive to keep it up. Isn't it pretty?

RW: Do you all deal with any, I know Eleanor Brackenridge was one of the leaders of the suffrage movement, and the club was born at a time when women were very much concerned about their rights. And I'm wondering, has it, over the years that you've been involved, have you all been involved in sort of, political issues in a broader sense, like ERA or abortion rights or any of those issues?

NH: No.

RW: How has this played itself out?

NH: No.

RW: Maybe you have, like, by-laws against this?

NH: I don't really know if the by-laws do, but for some reason, they don't get into, involved in that. It's not at all like what she was. She even had the first library or the bookmobile.

RW: That's right. I think it was the first in the state.

NH: Yeah.

RW: She was a miraculous woman.

NH: She was. Very much so, and uh, but, right now, I think the main thrust in the last few years has been to give toward scholarships for young people.

RW: Young women? Or men, too?

NH: I guess it's for both, it seemed like I saw just women, but, uh, from all the different high schools they can. I think they have given like eight or nine thousand dollars a year for scholarship.

RW: That's quite a lot.

NH: It's very nice, they do very well.

RW: Uh, has the membership been diversified in terms of like, ethnic background? Are there any African-American or...

NH: Yeah. We do have...

RW: Is there a struggle around that?

NH: No, there is no struggle. We had one, uh, Afro-American, one black that joined, and I think she has moved away. But she was in our Friendship Roundtable, and I believe she had, she had—what was interesting about that she had participated in the Fiesta Event of the Woman's Club, because at that Fiesta Coronation, and the flower show, they also present the queen from each of the bases, the military bases. And she had been in that and had seen, as a young woman, had seen what the Woman's Club was about and she decided that she'd like to join. She joined and yes, we do have Mexican-Americans, we've had some very active Mexican-Americans. Uh, Goas, G-o-a-s, I think from the Goas Tamales, I think that was...

RW: That was her last name?

NH: Yes. And she's now dead. But we had a lot of different, we have several Mexican-Americans, I would say.

RW: Do you remember the name of the Afro-American?

NH: No, and I don't have my yearbook.

RW: Was she in the military herself?

NH: Yes. At that point, she was, evidently to be presented, but then she was going to college, so I don't know if she served, I don't really know how that was. I remember speaking to her. Then she moved out of town, I think she moved to New Braunfels, and we didn't see her anymore. We didn't know if she was just, a step to see if the Woman's Club would do anything...

RW: But there was no controversy, no disparaging remarks, or...

NH: No. That was all accepted.

RW: That's quite a testimonial to your...When was that? Do you remember when she joined?

NH: No. That was over ten years ago, in the early eighties.

RW: So, um, is your daughter a member of the Woman's Club? Or maybe she doesn't live in San Antonio.

NH: No. No. She hasn't joined. We do have some young, we do have some young members. But we don't tend to see them at the clubhouse, 'cause they mainly participate during Fiesta.

RW: So what other roundtables have you participated in? Or have you, ahs this the...

NH: The Friendship Roundtable, where I'm not active, for a couple of years, and the Soiree, which is the evening.

RW: Because you work now?

NH: Well, the Soiree meets in the evening, but I haven't been active in it. It's a great group of women.

RW: What do they do, they, it's more...

NH: They will meet, sometimes they meet here at the clubhouse, sometimes we would meet at a restaurant, and get together and visit and talk, and it's a real nice, cohesive group and I would say the majority of women in Soiree are between the ages of forty and fifty.

RW: Now, you said some of the roundtables had specific themes and some were, like the Carousel was only a social group. International relations or...

NH: Yes.

RW: Flower arranging or what?

NH: We do have that.

RW: Can you give me an example of some of the kinds of...

NH: I hope somebody who you interview later might be a member and can tell you more about it. But we have American Home Roundtable...

RW: What's that?

NH: You're asking...I used to be counselor of roundtables. The counselor of roundtables knew what every roundtable did and would help to get membership divided. Also Book Lovers Roundtable...

RW: Like book reviews and...

NH: ...book reviews, and that shows that that was organized in nineteen twenty-two. And then Roundtable of Letters has merged with Book Lovers, and that was chartered in nineteen twenty-nine. Carousel Roundtable began in nineteen forty-seven.

RW: What was the letters? Maybe they studied literature, or...

NH: I don't know, here again. It's to join in quest of pleasurable knowledge through reading good books.

RW: And that was another kind of book club that they had.

NH: Yes. And Carousel, uh, motto, is "Fun, fellowship and [end of side one]
[beginning of side two]

NH: ...several of my friends said, "Why don't you do that?" 'Cause they were doing it, you know, 'cause at that time, it was much easier to get. I forgot, it was just twenty additional hours or something, but I just didn't want to do that.

RW: I didn't want to [unintelligible]

NH: And how long have been at, living in Austin? All of your life?

RW: No, we're from Dallas.

NH: Oh.

RW: Um, I moved to Austin in about, before the boom, in nineteen seventy-nine, at that time [pause in tape] Ann Richards was the County Commissioner and we worked on an exhibit on Texas women,

“Texas Women a Celebration of History” which opened at the Institute of Texas Cultures in nineteen eighty-one. I don’t know if you remember it? But, we, uh, the Institute built the exhibit, so we commuted back and forth, not Ann, but other staff...

NH: And what was the title of it?

RW: It was called “Texas Women, a Celebration of History.”

NH: Do you know who I wish you could interview sometime are some cousins of mine, have you ever heard of the seven Timmerman (sp?) sisters? There are only three living...

RW: Yes, I’ve read, I’ve read about them in, I think, in our files.

NH: They are my cousins. My father was a, ah, what do you call it, a godfather to one of them, uh, gals, but they were seven women and they never married.

RW: They never, they lived where, in a little...

NH: In Geronimo. They live in Geronimo.

RW: Where’s that?

NH: It’s between San Marcos and Seguin.

RW: Oh, that must be a beautiful area.

NH: G-e-r, uh-huh. But I don’t know, Wanda is, uh, I’m trying to think if she’s the one who is really the spokesperson, she’s still living, her name is Wanda Timmerman (sp?).

RW: Can you give me a, if I call will you give me a phone number or...

NH: I will look it up and see if I’ve got that, year, at home.

RW: They must be in their eighties.

NH: Yes, oh yes. I’m trying to think of who the youngest one is, and I can’t think of their name—this is the first year I didn’t send them a Christmas card. And, so I didn’t get one back. But, we usually keep up just at Christmas, but they, I mean for talking and finding out about Texas and, they put on an exhibit at the Institute of Texan Cultures and they were there. When I got married, ah, some

of the people, we got married in Austin...is this on? Yes, it's on. O.K. When I got married, some people were driving from San Antonio and so they saw this station wagon and all these seven women were all dressed alike, and they thought...

Winegarten: ...they had a little too much to drink.

NH: But these seven Timmerman sisters always dressed alike. And they have a beautiful farm house in Geronimo.

RW: Were they ranch women or farm women?

NH: No, their father, let's see, they had a farm, yes, a farm, but they also had a flower shop and they, uh, they are very interesting. They made cookies that were sold at Neiman-Marcus.

RW: I would just love to go interview them...

NH: And at Christmas, they have a beautiful tree in their room, and all of this, this waterfall and everything. I don't know if they still do that, but people would come, make appointments to come and see.

RW: Have all their records been donated to the institute? Like their...

NH: I don't know, but it would be interesting to find out. Bu I know, that in the farm house, when you went upstairs, each, each one had their closets, each one had a color or like a ribbon on the clothes hangers, when they'd wash for the seven of them, they'd all get it on the same one.

RW: Did they look alike?

NH: No, no.

RW: Were any of them twins?

NH: No. They were all... and they were so interesting. I remember going there at Christmastime and at other times and it was just, wonderful.

RW: Just from a sociology standpoint, it's interesting that they were group unto themselves, I guess they never, I don't know if one could even say, ask them why they didn't get married, I don't know...

NH: I think you could ask them. You know, uh, I just accepted it from a child, and I never even thought about why didn't they, because I was so used to seeing them. That way.

RW: That's great.

NH: And they had a movie or something, that was done, and it was near Geronimo, and I forget who the movie actor was, but they used I think, their ranch land, for this movie.

RW: That's a great Texas story...

NH: I think it would be, when you think about women, when you were saying women, I thought they really ought to be included because they are so unusual.

RW: Well, somebody could, should do a documentary if they haven't already using some of their photographs and their house, and since some of them are still alive...

NH: Only three.

RW: I'm gonna guess over the years they've been interviewed many times by reporters, because I've personally seen newspaper articles.

NH: Yes. And they supported the Seguin and the Texas Lutheran College football team, I mean they would go and laugh and see, so they supported the community. And they're members of the little church in Geromino.

RW: What church? The Lutheran church?

NH: I think it's called an E and R.

RW: Now, how are they related to you? Are you first cousins once removed?

NH: Oh, no, probably second or third cousins.

RW: On your mother's...

NH: My father's side.

RW: Well, this is a great lead.

NH: Uh, So what have been some of the greatest satisfactions you've gotten out of your membership in

the Woman's Club?

NH: I made some really wonderful friends. One of my dear friends, Miriam Nearman (sp?) who is now in her eighties, I met her here in Carousel Roundtable and we formed a very close relationship and we're still the best of friends. And we just love to do things together, and, uh, so if I wouldn't have joined the Woman's Club I never would have met Miriam. And so, ah...

RW: Are your mother or mother-in-law still alive?

NH: No. No, they are both deceased. And so my mother died in seventy-eight and my mother-in-law in seventy-five.

RW: Do you have a picture of the three of you together that would be...

NH: Yes, I do, but I don't have it with me.

RW: No, but I would love to have a print of that for our archives...

NH: O.K., it's very lovely. We're in our long dresses, it was at tea hour.

RW: Would you lend it to us so we could reproduce it or whatever.

NH: Sure, I'd be happy to. Yes, I'll just get your address and I'll drop it off to you.

RW: Or you could send it to our archives, they're at the...Jill Jackson I think, or Linda Schott, whatever, we'll follow up.

NH: Yes, I do have a picture of the three of us here in the clubhouse.

RW: That would be great. If we ever do a book or something, a monograph, I think that, that kind of says a lot, you know, it represents a certain intergenerational theme that I think has some meaning, and um...well tell your daughter that she has to join 'cause we have to...

NH: That's right. That's right.

RW: So, some of the friendships you've made here have really meant...

NH: O.K., friendships have been really good, but that was the major one, and there are many other friends, uh, Barbara Yu, who you're going to interview this afternoon...

RW: Tell me a little bit about her, I don't know, she's a realtor...

NH: But Barbara moved...

RW: You met her here?

NH: Yes, uh-huh. Her mother had been a member of the Woman's Club for a long time, Rose Wu...

RW: Oh, O.K.

NH: And so her member, her mother...

RW: I didn't realize that was her mother.

NH: Yes. And so her mother has been a member here for a number of years, so when Barbara moved to San Antonio, her mother got her involved in the Woman's Club, too, so...

RW: What year yearbook are you looking at?

NH: I'm looking at ninety-four, ninety-five, I couldn't find my later one.

RW: I hope that the institute, that we have one of those in the...

NH: But anyway, her mother asked her to join, and we just had a great time. I don't see a picture of her unless she's right over here, these are our new members...

RW: Oh, this is great. We should, I mean, our archives, I, you all have donated all your papers to, and we need to be sure that every year we get new yearbooks.

NH: And I'm really wondering about—you know what I do, I really do miss those minute books.

When I was chairman of Carousel Roundtable, it was so interesting to read back in the minutes and see what—now we don't have the minute books anymore.

RW: Why not?

NH: Well, I think they're all at UTSA in safekeeping. We used to have them in files up here. I know when I was chairman I went back and read through all the minute books, 'cause it was fun to see what the Carousel Roundtable had done before I joined the club.

RW: Well, tell me some of the things that they had...

NH: I wish I could remember. My memory is gone. [laughter]

RW: We're having some Geritol moments, but we will never tell.

NH: Oh, but I mean, that's what was so interesting to read. I know that they had couples, you know, the couple get-togethers with the husbands in the old days. And I think that one of our Roundtables has brought that back now, where they will meet and bring their husbands for lunch. And I think that's happening right now in a roundtable. And, uh, but I miss that, because I think that we could glean a lot, and we need to hear those stories again, 'cause I think it's fun to know what they used to do, before nineteen sixty.

RW: And you enjoy the hand work, you said. Did you know how to sew and do embroidery before you...

NH: No. No, but we would, we just, everybody learned how to do things, we made curtains, like I said, for the powder room upstairs. But somebody had donated, I think, twenty-four or thirty-six beautiful napkins, so we just learned how to sew them together, I don't know how we did that, but we have a magnificent banquet cloth.

RW: Somebody knew how...

NH: Yes, somebody who knew how to sew taught us.

Winegarten: Why would you do that? Is it here?

NH: Well, it was just, yeah, I'm sure it's here, it's here still, and it was used on really big tea functions. But I was telling your mother, we used to have tea hour four Wednesdays a month when I first joined the club.

RW: And the hostesses would wear long dresses...

Winegarten: Oh.

NH: And I can remember, you know, going out and buying a long dress, because if you were a hostess, if your roundtable was the hostess, you, you came dressed in a long dress.

RW: This is petty, but could you wear the same one twice.

NH: Oh, sure. [laughter] Many times. 'Cause we would wear them several times a year. I mean, if you were on the board, then you had a long dress, if you were hostesses, if you were a member of two or three roundtables, you got to do it. No, but the people who came, the membership who came, they wouldn't wear the long dresses like the hostesses. And I got to be, where I was a hostess, and I came in the middle of the day in a long dress and I needed to get home quickly for my child, I felt a little foolish in a long dress.

RW: You would hope you wouldn't get a flat tire...

NH: But, anyway, it would be nice to have that once a year.

RW: Do you remember any controversies in your group about anything?

NH: Well, I can remember that this happened, I believe before I joined the club, that the property which is north of the Woman's Club, was available for sale. And now a nursing home sits on that property. And I just remember that, uh, hearing my mother-in-law tell me that she wished that the Woman's Club could acquire that, 'cause we could use the property.

RW: What would you all have done with it?

NH: It could have been used for parking. And if there would have been an expansion, because there was talk about having an additional room put on like, for a tea room in the early seventies. But anyway, there were, I can remember the controversy, because one of our members wanted to contribute, she wanted to purchase the property and give it to the club, and there were some members who felt that, they didn't want to accept the gift.

RW: Well, why, because they accepted the gift of this house, I guess that this is the couple that...

NH: But I don't know if they purchased it, see, they purchased that, they purchase the building, it was not a gift.

RW: Was it because they didn't care for this woman, or...

NH: I think they felt she would, uh, might use her power, give her a way to run the club, maybe ingratiate herself and to become too powerful. Some women had that feeling, my mother-in-law didn't. She thought that was a different point...

RW: Did this other woman start another club because that offer was turned down?

NH: I don't know, because that was later. And I really wasn't that interested in it, I just remember that there was a big disappointment. Because my mother-in-law loved everybody, and she thought that everybody was good and kind and for the good of the club.

RW: Would you like to tell me the name of that woman? Her initials?

NH: Mrs. E.M. Stevens (sp?).

RW: So I think that is not unusual that people have different motivations for participating in organizational life, don't you?

NH: Probably so, but I don't know anything about it, maybe one of our older members can recall it differently. Who else are you interviewing?

RW: Uh, well, Barbara, and a woman who's been active since the sixties, uh, who couldn't come to, uh Hazel Nelson.

NH: Yes. She may know.

RW: And, um, yes, and I was also suggested to, June Meyer would be...

NH: June is one of our relatively newer members. She's a, she has been a past president. Very interesting woman, she's fabulous.

NH: In fact, somebody told me that she was reared in an orphanage and she encouraged the other kids in the orphanage to run away.

NH: She is a fabulous woman, you know. See, here's her picture, in eighty-three.

RW: Oh, I have, she, I, she looks familiar, I know that I have met her at some activity.

NH: Now, someone else is Willie Meyer (sp?). I don't know if you could interview her by phone or

not, I guess that doesn't work.

RW: It's not that, it's just that we're trying to, we're trying to interview a representative sample of women from different walks of life and different volunteer organizations, so, I'm not interviewing ten people from any group, I'm interviewing a few from the Women's Club, you know, some of them, I've interviewed Brigadier General retired Lillian Dunlap, who was the head of the Army Nurses Corps. Some women who, in their own right, are just, you know, unique. But, UTSA center is particularly interested in the Women's Club, they're particularly interested in the role of volunteer organizations, 'cause, you know, women have made such a tremendous difference in building libraries and schools and churches and symphonies and all those things we take for granted. And this role has been overlooked in the history books. You know, just beautification, like your flower shows and home, and I do want to take a picture with you with Eleanor Brackenridge in some of the rooms, maybe we could, you know, go around and you could show me the facilities.

NH: It really is wonderful, and we really do try to keep it up.

RW: Is that very expensive.

NH: Yes. We're into a really big, right now...

RW: Are you all on a fund-raising campaign?

NH: Yeah, that, we keep working on that, and really, our biggest effort is through the Fiesta. With this Fiesta luncheon, it brings in a lot of money.

RW: When is that going to be held?

NH: A week from Thursday, next Thursday.

RW: I should come over to it. Do you think it's sold out?

NH: The tickets are three dollars per person, it's going to be at the Rivercenter Mall, at the Marriott Rivercenter.

RW: What day is that?

NH: I believe the twenty-seventh, I'm not sure. I'm going to be out of town. Mary? When is the Fiesta luncheon going to be?

Mary: I'm sorry.

NH: Fiesta luncheon at the Marriott?

Mary: The twenty-fourth. It's Thursday the twenty-fourth, I think.

NH: She's interested—I'm going to be in London at that point.

RW: Poor thing. I feel so sorry for you, it's pathetic.

NH: But when I got it, I just sort of blotted it out, I knew it is on a Thursday.

Mary: I'll get you an invitation, I have one in my office.

RW: Thank you very much.

Mary: And you are going to London? I'm so jealous I want to go so bad. I want teacups. I went once, and I hated London, there were so many china shops. And now I can't wait to go back so I can go buy some china.

RW: Well, just give her your shopping list, and she'll be thrilled to just bring all that back in her suitcase.

NH: Of course.

RW: So, how do you see, uh, I guess let's just conclude with maybe—what direction do you see the Women's Club moving? You said that, some of the things are becoming a little more formal, or they're having, what did you tell me there now? Coming back a little bit to something...

NH: I'm hoping, my hope is that maybe we can bring that back. Um, our women really do love the luncheon meetings, which are the first Wednesday of every month.

RW: And you still are having the...

NH: We're still having that. And we always have a speaker for that. And our meetings are shorter, we can bring guests...

RW: Can you give me an example of some of the kinds of speakers you've had—thank you. Um...

NH: O.K., just as kind of an idea, we've had someone, like how to talk to anybody about anything, it was from KTSA radio and news. Usually at Christmas, we have a Christmas gala. Uh, sometimes its presented by some of our own members who sing. I can remember when, uh, we had Trinity University, their a capella choir and they came and sang on the steps here. And Christmas is usually a big event, we have a big artificial tree set up. And my hope is that someday that the Woman's Club would be opened, as a fundraiser, at Christmastime. And, uh, we have a Christmas Fair. And they've been doing this for a number of years where vendors come and set up upstairs and luncheon is served or tea is served, and the people come in and there is a charge for that. So yes, now we're doing Christmas Fair as another fundraiser, and it's an excellent way to see the clubhouse.

RW: And the people rent the space out for weddings or I don't know what else, receptions, showers and those kind of things.

NH: Receptions, yes. We really don't have clubs per se, like the Rotary or the Jaycees, or...

RW: Other clubs don't, other women's clubs don't use this facility...

NH: No, they normally don't use it. It has been in the past, but it's mainly used now for weddings, receptions and...

RW: And your luncheons are elsewhere probably.

NH: No, our luncheons are held here in the dining room.

RW: It's probably catered...

NH: Yes, it's catered. Uh-huh, it's catered. Gone are the days when they fixed the food in the kitchen.

RW: Open a little tuna noodle casserole.

NH: It was very good, that's when Charles and Tracy were here, and we had such good food, we just, our plates were overflowing, we're all gaining weight.

RW: So you all are celebrating your hundredth anniversary next year. Are you all having a big, do you all know what you're going to do?

NH: They've got a committee working on it. So, it's yet to hear what it's going to be, but I'm sure it will be a, pull out all the stops.

RW: Well, if one of your roundtables ever needs a speaker, I'd be glad to come and talk about some of my books on women's history, or the women's suffrage movement and the role of Eleanor Brackenridge and the other San Antonio women...

NH: That would be great.

RW: I'd be happy to do that, I would be excited.

NH: Great, I'll write that name down again.

RW: And I'll give you my card.

NH: Great, 'cause every month we do have a meeting, and ah, Texas heritage department, it might come under that.

RW: Yes, well, I've done a book on the women's suffrage movement, called "Citizens At Last," a documentary history of the women's suffrage movement in Texas.

NH: How good.

RW: So that's the subject I know some things about, and Eleanor Brackenridge is one of my favorite women in Texas history. Apparently, all of her papers were burned or destroyed on her death, because we have not been able to locate any Eleanor Brackenridge papers of substance.

NH: Oh, really?

RW: So, we don't know why. But, you know, she was one of the first women in the United States to serve on the board of a bank.

NH: Uh-huh.

RW: Uh, she, as you know, she really revitalized the woman's suffrage movement and led it to its final

victory here in Texas. I mean, her life went from the beginning of the suffrage movement to the end, one of the few people who lived to see the whole struggle, and she's a real transitional figure and...

NH: And she never married.

RW: No, she never did, but she headed, she founded the PTA in Texas. Her mother's club became the PTA. She loved, apparently, cared about children with the bookmobile, she was a supporter of the YWCA, she and her brother gave money for dormitories and scholarship at UT Medical Branch in Galveston, so, we'd love to do a book about her, but it's, you know, without her papers it's really hard to find...

NH: I didn't realize.

RW: No, there's some at the University of Texas at Austin, but we have not been able to find like a, great big group of what her, letters. I mean, she was active in public life for sixty years, and you know, she must have written everybody. And I think that's a good example of why it's important to preserve women's papers so that, you know, lives like that will be documented. And she was such a great role model for young women. And she was an early temperance worker, and, um, anyway, she's one of my favorites.

NH: Yes, well, she's very interesting. She was very interesting. Well, I think the Woman's Club is, is on an upswing and I, I just feel that it's really a social club and I think that some of our members, sometimes, push too hard for it not to be a social club.

RW: They would like it to be what? You think they would like more social issues, or networking for business purposes?

NH: I wonder if it's networking, sometimes I wonder if it's used for networking. I don't feel I use it for networking, but maybe that's the way the role, or that's the way clubs are becoming or people are becoming.

RW: Well, do you that's necessarily bad.

NH: Bad? No, it's not bad. Uh, I don't know, I just get a different feel, in the club, in the women, I guess, who are joining. And maybe because twenty or thirty years ago, most women were not working.

RW: Maybe it's because most of them, at that time, were from San Antonio, maybe there are more newcomers, I'm not sure that's true.

NH: Yes, we do have a lot of newcomers, and we welcome them and we embrace them and we're glad that they join. And, uh, I really do, I think the Woman's Club has a place in San Antonio.

RW: I think that in the past, there was networking maybe in the sense that maybe women learned of prospective mates for their daughters and sons, I mean, it wasn't called networking, but I mean, maybe it was networking in a...

NH: That's true, that's networking in a different way. In a more social way. [laughter] And not business.

RW: Well, is there anything you'd like to say in conclusion?

NH: Well, I just feel very fortunate that you have selected the San Antonio Woman's Club, and I hope that you will get some other, vital information from the other ladies or women that you are going to interview.

RW: Well, thank you. And, uh, maybe we'll take some pictures and you'll show us around.